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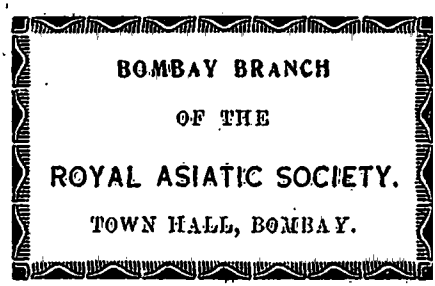

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND

IN THE

XVIIITH CENTURY

VOL. I.

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A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

IN THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

20204
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BY

WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE HISTORY of a nation may be written in so many different ways that it may not be useless, in laying these volumes before the public, to state in a few words the plan which I have adopted, and the chief objects at which I have aimed.

I have not attempted to write the history of the period I have chosen year by year, or to give a detailed account of military events or of the minor personal and party incidents which form so large a part of political annals. It has been my object to disengage from the great mass of facts those which relate to the permanent forces of the nation, or which indicate some of the more enduring features of national life. The growth or decline of the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the democracy, of the Church and of Dissent, of the agricultural, the manufacturing, and the commercial interests; the increasing power of Parliament and of the press; the history of political ideas, of art, of manners, and of belief; the changes that have taken place in the social and economical condition of the people; the influences that have modified national character; the relations of the mother country to its dependencies, and the causes that have accelerated or retarded the advancement of the latter, form the main subjects of this book.

In order to do justice to them within moderate limits it is necessary to suppress much that has a purely biographical, party, or military interest; and I have also not hesitated in some cases to depart from the strict order of chronology. The history of an institution or a tendency can only be written by collecting into a single focus facts that are spread over many years, and such matters may be more clearly treated according to the order of subjects than according to the order of time.

It will appear evident, I think, from the foregoing sketch, that this book differs widely from the very valuable history of Lord Stanhope, which covers a great part of the same period. Two writers, dealing with the same country and the same time, must necessarily relate many of the same events; but our plans, our objects, and the classes of facts on which we have especially dwelt, are so very different that our books can hardly, I hope, come into any real competition; and I should much regret if it were thought that the present work had been written in any spirit of rivalry, or with any wish to depreciate the merits of its predecessor. Lord Stanhope was not able to bring to his task the artistic talent, the power, or the philosophical insight of some of his contemporaries; but no one can have studied with care the period about which he wrote without a feeling of deep respect for the range and accuracy of his research, for the very unusual skill which he displayed in the difficult art of selecting from great multitudes of facts those which are truly characteristic and significant, and, above all, for his transparent honesty of purpose, for the fulness and fairness with which he seldom failed to recount the faults of those with whom he agreed and the merits of those from whom he differed. This last quality is one of the rarest in history, and it is especially admirable in a writer who had himself strong party convictions, who passed much of his life in active politics,

and who was often called upon to describe contests in which his own ancestors bore a part.

To the great courtesy of the authorities of the French Foreign Office I am indebted for copies of some valuable letters relating to the closing days of Queen Anne; and I must also take this opportunity of acknowledging the unwearied kindness I have received from Sir BERNARD BURKE, Ulster King of Arms, during my investigation of those Irish State Papers which he has arranged so admirably and which he knows so well.

LONDON: *November* 1877.

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND

IN

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

The political history of England in the eighteenth century falls naturally into two great divisions. After a brief period of rapid fluctuations, extending over the latter days of William and through the reign of Anne, the balance of parties was determined on the accession of George I. The Whigs acquired an ascendancy so complete that their adversaries were scarcely able even to modify the course of legislation, and that ascendancy continued without intermission, and almost without obstruction, for more than forty-five years. But on the accession of George III. the long period of Whig rule terminated. After about ten years of weak governments and party anarchy, Lord North succeeded, in 1770, in forming a Tory ministry of commanding strength. The dominion of the party was, indeed, broken in 1782 for a few months, in consequence of the disasters of the American War; but on the failure of the Coalition Ministry it was speedily re-established. It became as absolute as the Whig ascendancy had ever been. It lasted, without a break, to the end of the century, and it was only overthrown on the eve of the Reform Bill of 1832.)

There is one theory on the subject of these political vicissitudes to which it is necessary briefly to advert, for it has been advocated by an historian of great eminence, has been fre-

quently repeated, and has, in some respects, considerable plausibility. It has been alleged that the policy of the two great parties has been not merely modified, but reversed, since the first half of the eighteenth century; that the Tories of the time of Queen Anne and of the first two Georges were substantially the same as the Whigs of the early years of the present century, and the older Whigs as the modern Tories. The Tories, we are reminded, opposed Marlborough and the French war, as the Whigs of the nineteenth century opposed Wellington and the Peninsular war. The Tories in 1711 overcame the opposition of the House of Lords by the creation of twelve peers, as the Whigs in 1832 overcame the same opposition by the threat of a still larger creation. The Tories advocated, and the Whigs opposed, free trade principles at the peace of Utrecht. The Tories had at least some Catholic sympathies, while the Whigs were the chief authors of the penal laws against Catholics. The Tories agitated in the early Hanoverian period for short parliaments and for the restriction of the corrupt influence of the Crown. The Whigs carried the Septennial Act, and were the usual opponents of place bills and pension bills.

I think, however, that a more careful examination will sufficiently show that, in spite of these appearances, the ground for assuming this inversion of principles is very small. The main object of the Whig party in the early part of the eighteenth century was to establish in England a system of government in which the will of the people as expressed by parliament should be supreme, and the power of the monarch should be subject to the limitations it imposed. The substitution of a parliamentary title for Divine right as the basis of the throne, and the assertion of the right of the nation to depose a dynasty which had transcended the limits of the constitution, were the great principles for which the Whigs were contending. They involved or governed the whole system of Whig policy, and they were assuredly in perfect accordance with its later developments. The Tory party, on the other hand, under Queen Anne was to a great extent, and under George I. was almost exclusively, Jacobite. The overwhelming majority of its members held fervently the doctrines of the divine right of kings and

of the sinfulness of all resistance, and they accordingly regarded the power of Parliament as altogether subordinate to that of a legitimate king.) The difference of dynasties was thus not merely a question of persons but a question of principles. Each dynasty represented a whole scheme of policy or theory of government, the one being essentially Tory and the other essentially Whig.' The maintenance of the Hanoverian dynasty on the throne was, therefore, very naturally the supreme aim of the Whig party. They adopted whatever means they thought conducive to its attainment, and in this simple fact we have the key to what may appear the aberrations of their policy.

If we enter more into detail there can be no question that the Tory party of the present century has been essentially the party of the landed gentry and of the Established Church, while it has been a main function of the Whigs to watch over the interests of the commercial classes and of the Nonconformists. But these characteristics are just as true of the days of Oxford and Bolingbroke as of those of Eldon and Castlereagh. The immense majority of the country gentry and clergy in the early years of the eighteenth century were Tories, and the party was called indifferently the 'Church party,' or the 'country party,' while the commercial classes and the Dissenters uniformly supported the Whigs. The law making the possession of a certain amount of landed property an essential qualification for all members of Parliament, except a few specified categories, was a Tory law, carried under Queen Anne, in spite of the opposition of the Whigs, and it continued unaltered till 1838, when the land qualification was exchanged for a general property qualification, which in its turn was abolished by the Liberals in 1858. The two ecclesiastical measures which excited most discussion under Anne were the Occasional Conformity Act, which was intended to break the political power of the Dissenters by increasing the stringency of the Test Act, and the Schism Act, which was intended to prevent them from educating their children in their faith. Both of them were Tory measures; both of them became law in a period of Tory ascendancy; both of them were repealed at the triumph of the Whigs. A very analogous conflict raged in the present century

around the Test Act and around the restrictions that excluded the Dissenters from the Universities. Like their predecessors in the eighteenth century, the modern Whigs were the steady advocates of the Dissenters. Like their predecessors in the eighteenth century, the Tories contended vehemently for restrictions which they believed to be useful to the Church. In no respect were the Tory Governments in the days of Pitt and Castlereagh more remarkably distinguished from their Whig successors than by their extreme jealousy of the Press, their desire to limit its influence, and the severity with which they punished its excesses. But precisely the same contrast between the parties existed in the earlier phases of their history. The Whig Government that followed the Revolution established the liberty of the Press. The first of the series of taxes on knowledge which the modern Liberals, after a long struggle against Tory opposition, succeeded in abolishing were the stamp upon paper and the duty upon advertisements, which were imposed by the Tory ministry of Anne. The same ministry was prominent in the eighteenth century for the frequency and bitterness of its Press prosecutions, while the long Whig ministry of Walpole was in no respect more remarkable than for its uniform tolerance of the most virulent criticism.

In the face of these facts it is not, I think, too much to say that the notion of the two parties having exchanged their principles is altogether fallacious, and the force of the instances that have been alleged will, on examination, be much weakened, if not wholly dispelled. The attitude of parties towards European wars is so slightly and remotely connected with their political principles that the fact of a party having opposed a war in one century and supported a war in another can hardly be regarded as a reasonable presumption of apostacy. The free trade policy which the Tories upheld in the reign of Anne has never been distinctively Whig, and in promoting its triumph the party which counts Hume and Tucker among its writers, and Pitt and Huskisson among its statesmen, deserves a credit at least equal to its opponents. The attacks which the Whigs directed in 1713 against the free trade clauses of the Tory commercial treaty with France, were scarcely more vehement than those which Fox and Grey directed on the same

ground against the commercial treaty negotiated by Pitt in 1786. It is true that the Whigs in the seventeenth, and in the first half of the eighteenth, century, were more actively anti-Catholic in their policy than the Tories, and that they are responsible for the most atrocious of the penal laws against Catholicism; but the obvious explanation is to be found in the fact that the Whigs were struggling for a Protestant succession, while the legitimate line adhered to Catholicism. Apart from this, the Tories had little or no sympathy with the Catholics. If the Dissenters were more strongly antipapal than the clergy of the Established Church, the commercial classes were certainly more tolerant than the country gentry. The Tory Government under Anne did nothing for the Catholics; it even issued a proclamation in 1711 for putting the laws against them into force, and it is a remarkable fact that the only minister in the first quarter of the 18th century who showed any real disposition to relieve them of their disabilities was the Whig Stanhope. The Bill substituting septennial for triennial parliaments was, it is true, a Whig measure, and it is also true that the Tories in the early Hanoverian period were, in conjunction with a large body of discontented Whigs, energetic parliamentary reformers, advocating triennial or even annual parliaments, and inveighing bitterly against pensions and places. But in this there is nothing perplexing. The Whigs carried the Septennial Act because they believed that a dissolution immediately after the accession of George I. and the rebellion of 1715 would be of the utmost danger to the dynasty which it was their great object to defend. They maintained the Septennial Act mainly because they were in power, and desired, like all administrations, to avoid any unnecessary shock that would endanger their stability. That short parliaments are not naturally Tory, or long parliaments naturally Whig, is abundantly shown by the earlier history of the Triennial Bill, which, having been first carried by the revolutionary Long Parliament in 1641, was repealed in the Tory reaction of the Restoration, and re-enacted in 1694, after a struggle that lasted for several years, during which the Whigs had generally supported and the Tories had usually opposed it. The Whigs, when in office under Walpole, maintained and multiplied places and pensions because they

were at their disposal, and were powerful instruments in maintaining their majority. The Tories acted in the same manner when they regained power under George III. If, at a time when they were in almost hopeless opposition, they took a different course, they were merely adopting the ordinary tactics of an Opposition.

The great triumph of Whig principles that was achieved at the Revolution was much less due to any general social, or intellectual development than to the follies of a single sovereign, and the abilities of a small group of statesmen. For a long time, indeed, the tendency of events had been in the opposite direction. In the earlier periods of English history, perhaps the most important element of English liberty lay in the great multitude of independent yeomen or small landed proprietors. In the reign of Henry VI. Fortescue had declared that in no other country in Europe were they so numerous as in England, and he attributed to this fact a very large part of the well-being of the nation.[1] For many generations, however, this class had been steadily declining. The relaxation of the feudal system enabled proprietors to alienate their land; the increase of wealth had the inevitable result of accumulating landed properties; the great extension of the woollen trade, combined with the high rate of agricultural wages under Henry VII., made it the interest of landlords to turn arable land into pasture; the sudden alteration in the value of money resulting from the gold discoveries in America, and the violent changes in the distribution of wealth produced by the confiscation of Church property aggravated the tendency; and in the latter Tudor reigns there were bitter complaints that the small proprietors were being rapidly absorbed, that tenants were being everywhere turned adrift, and that great tracts which had once been inhabited by a flourishing yeomanry were being converted into sheepwalks. More, Roger Ascham, Harrison, Latimer, Strafford, and Bacon bear abundant testimony to the magnitude of the evil. A long series of attempts was made to check it by laws placing obstacles in the way of new enclosures, prohibiting the pulling down of farm-houses to which twenty acres

[1] Fortescue *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, cap. xxix.

of arable land were attached, restraining the number of sheep in a flock, and even regulating the number of acres under tillage; but this legislation, which had been warmly eulogised, and in part originated, by Bacon, was probably imperfectly executed and was certainly insufficient to arrest the tendency. The yeomanry formed the chief political counterpoise to the country gentry. In the Civil War they were conspicuous on the side of the Parliament, and even after the Restoration it was estimated that there were more than 160,000 small landed proprietors in England. Every year, however, their number diminished.[1] If they continued in the country districts, they sank into peasants, or rose into country gentry, and in the first case they lost all political power while in the second case they usually passed into the Tory ranks. The towns, and the commercial classes who inhabited them, had, no doubt, rapidly increased under the Stuarts, but they had hardly made a corresponding advance in political importance. The guilds which gave the commercial classes a large amount of political concentration, had disappeared. The modern inventions that have given manufacturing industry an unparalleled extension had not yet arisen, and by a recent and skilful innovation the political power of the commercial classes had been fatally impaired. Under Charles II. the corporations most hostile to the Crown had been accused of petty irregularities and misdemeanours. Sentences of forfeiture had been pronounced against them; new charters were granted, framed in such a manner that the members were necessarily subject to the approval of the Crown, and by this process almost the whole borough representation throughout England had been reduced to a condition of complete subserviency. The judicial bench has more than once proved the most formidable bulwark against the encroachments of despotism, but in England the judges were removable at pleasure, and had become the mere creatures of the Crown. In no age, and in no country have State-trials been conducted with a more flagrant disregard for justice and for decency, and with a

[1] See Eden's *Hist. of the Working Classes*, vol. i. 73, 115; Macaulay's *Hist.* chap. iii.; Fischel *On the Constitution*, 315–316, and the admirable chap. on the History of the English Peasantry in Mr. Thornton's *Overpopulation*. Bacon has dwelt strongly on the evil in his *History of Henry VII.*, and in his essay *On the True Greatness of Kingdoms*.

more scandalous subserviency to the Crown, than in England under Charles II., and eleven out of the twelve judges gave their sanction to the claim of his successor to dispense with the laws.

Nor was the balance of intellectual influences more favourable to freedom. There existed, it is true, a small body of able men who adopted the principles of Sidney or of Locke, and who often carried them almost or altogether to the verge of republicanism; but the universities, which were the very centres of intellectual life, were thoroughly Tory. Hobbes, who was the most influential freethinker of the Restoration, advocated a system of the most crushing despotism, and the ecclesiastical influences which exercised an overwhelming influence over the great mass of the English people were eminently inimical to freedom. In the old Catholic times an Archbishop of Canterbury had combined with the barons at Runnymede, and, in opposition to the Pope and to his legate had wrested the great charter of English liberty from the Sovereign, but the Church which succeeded to the sceptre of Catholicism was essentially Erastian, and the instincts of its clergy were almost uniformly despotic. The free spirit generated in the Reformation had taken refuge in Puritanism, but in the reaction that accompanied and followed the Restoration, Puritanism seemed hopelessly discredited and crushed. The hostility which the country gentry and the established clergy had always felt towards it was intensified by the many battles which the first had fought, and by the many humiliations which the latter had undergone, while the populace hated it for its austerity, and the deepest feelings of the English nation were stung to madness at the memory of their slaughtered king. The doctrine of non-resistance in its extreme form was taught in the Homilies of the Church, embodied in the oath of allegiance,[1] in the corporation oath of Charles II.[2] and in the declaration prescribed by the Act of Uniformity,[3] enrolled by great Anglican casuists among the leading tenets of Christianity, and persistently enforced from the pulpit. It had become, as a later bishop truly said, 'the distinguishing character

[1] 'I, A B, do declare and believe that it is not lawful *upon any pretence whatever* to take up arms against the king.'

[2] 13 Car. ii. c. 2.

[3] 14 Car. ii. stat. ii. c. 1.

of the Church of England.'[1] At a time when the constitution was still unformed, when every institution of freedom and every bulwark against despotism was continually assailed, the authorised religious teachers of the nation were incessantly inculcating this doctrine, and it may probably be said without exaggeration that it occupied a more prominent position in the preaching and the literature of the Anglican Church than any other tenet in the whole compass of theology. Even Burnet and Tillotson, who were men of unquestionable honesty, and who subsequently took a conspicuous part on the side of the Revolution, when attending Russell in his last hours, had impressed upon him in the strongest manner the duty of accepting the doctrine of the absolute unlawfulness of resistance, and had clearly intimated that if he did not do so they could feel no confidence in his salvation.[2] The clergy who attended Monmouth at his execution told him he could not belong to the Church of England unless he acknowledged it.[3] The University of Cambridge in 1679, and the University of Oxford on the occasion of the death of Russell, authoritatively proclaimed it, and the latter university consigned the leading Whig writings in defence of freedom to the flames, and prohibited all students from reading them.[4] The immense popularity which the miracle of the royal touch had acquired, indicated only too faithfully the blind and passionate loyalty of the time; nor was there any other period in English history in which the spirit of independence and the bias in favour of freedom which had long characterised the English people were so little shown as in the years that followed the Restoration.

It was impossible that this could last. The enthusiasm of loyalty was strung to so high a pitch that reaction was inevitable, but had it not been for a very rare combination of causes it would never have been carried to the point of revolution. The immorality of the court of Charles which shocked the sober feelings of the middle-class, the contemptible character of the King, the humiliation which French patronage

[1] See the dying profession of Lake, Bishop of Chichester, Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors*, p. 50.

[2] Birch's *Life of Tillotson* (2nd ed.) 109–122.

[3] See Fox's *James II.* p. 265.

[4] See on these decrees Cooke's *Hist. of Parties*, i. 105, 315–355. Somers' *Tracts*, viii. 420–424; ix. 367.

and Dutch victories imposed upon the nation, the growth of religious scepticism, which at last weakened the influence of the clergy, the atrocious persecution of Nonconformists, and the infamy of the State trials, had all considerable effect, but they operated chiefly upon a small body of enlightened men. The popularity of the Revolution, so far as it existed, arose from the conflict between the three great passions of the English mind. These were attachment to the throne, attachment to the Church, and dread of Catholicism. The 'No Popery' feeling under Charles II. had burst out fiercely in the panic about the Popish plot and in the atrocities that followed it; but when the Whigs endeavoured to avail themselves of it to pass the Exclusion Bill their efforts recoiled upon themselves, and it became evident that even this passion was less powerful than attachment to the legitimate order of succession. Yet it was to this feeling that the triumph of the Revolution was mainly due. Had the old dynasty adhered to the national faith its position would have been impregnable, and in the existing disposition of men's minds it was neither impossible nor improbable that the free institutions of England would have shared the fate of those of Spain, of Italy, and of France. Most happily for the country, a bigoted Catholic, singularly destitute both of the tact and sagacity of a statesman, and of the qualities that win the affection of a people, mounted the throne, devoted all the energies of his nature and all the resources of his position to extending the religion most hateful to his people, attacked with a strange fatuity the very Church on whose teaching the monarchical enthusiasm mainly rested, and thus drove the most loyal of his subjects into violent opposition. Without the assistance of the Church and Tory party the Revolution would have been impossible, and it is certain that the Church would never have led the opposition to the dispensing power had not that power been exerted to remove the disabilities of the Catholics and Dissenters. The overtures of the King to the Nonconformists, whom the Church regarded as her bitterest enemies, his manifest intention to displace Protestants by Catholics in the leading posts of the Government, the violation of the constitution of an Oxford college which assailed the clergy in the very citadel of their power, and finally, the prosecution

of the seven bishops, at last forced the advocates of passive obedience into reluctant opposition to their sovereign. Yet even then attachment to the legitimate line might have prevailed but for the belief that was industriously spread that the Prince of Wales was a supposititious child, and every stage in the intricate drama that ensued was governed more by the action of individuals and by accidental circumstances than by general causes. The defection of Marlborough, and of almost every leading politician on whom the King relied, brought William without opposition to London, but this was only the first step of the change. The Whigs were themselves by no means unanimous in desiring his accession to the throne, and it is quite certain that the great majority of the English people had no wish to break the natural order of succession. The doctrine of the indefeasible right of the legitimate sovereign, and of the absolute sinfulness of resistance, was in the eyes of the great majority of Englishmen the cardinal principle of political morality, and a blind, unqualified, unquestioning loyalty was the strongest and most natural form of political enthusiasm. This was the real danger to English liberty. Until this tone of thought and feeling was seriously modified, free institutions never could take root, and even after the intervention of William it was quite possible, and in the eyes of most Englishmen eminently desirable, that a Government should have been established so nearly legitimate as to receive the support of this enthusiasm—the consecration of this belief.

The most obvious method of achieving this end would have been to have retained James on the throne, imposing on him new parliamentary restrictions; but his flight to France rendered this impracticable, removed the greatest difficulty from the path of the Whigs, and made it possible for them to construct the ingenious fiction of abdication, which was of much use in quieting the consciences of the Tories. Assuming that James had abdicated, the infant prince was the natural heir, and he might have been called to the throne under a Protestant regency. But this, too, was made impossible by circumstances. The child had been carried to France, and the popular belief that he was supposititious damped the enthusiasm of his supporters. Assuming that James had

abdicated, and that his alleged son was supposititious, the coronation of Mary as sole sovereign would have established a legitimate monarchy. The wishes of the queen and the resolution of William, who threatened at once to retire to Holland and leave the country to anarchy, prevented this solution and made it absolutely necessary to call to the throne a sovereign whose title was manifestly a parliamentary one. Had any one of the other three courses been pursued, a shock would, no doubt, have been given to the Tory theory of government; but the old current of political thought would soon have resumed its course. The sovereignty would have still been regarded as of Divine right. The political enthusiasm of the great majority of the nation would have centred upon it, and the belief that it possessed a sanctity generically different from, and immeasurably transcending that of any other institution in the country would have given it a fatal power in every conflict with the parliament. By a very rare concurrence of circumstances, by the extraordinary folly of the legitimate sovereign, by the ambition and consummate statesmanship of William and of a small group of Whig statesmen, a form of government was established and maintained in England for which the mass of the people were intellectually wholly unprepared. The French war soon roused the national feeling, while James, with great folly, identified himself ostentatiously with the enemies of his country; and the indignation produced by the plots against the life of William, and at a later period by the recognition of the Pretender by Lewis XIV., conspired powerfully to the maintenance of the new Government. The Whig leaders employed in the interests of toleration and liberty an opportunity which was the result of violent currents of public feeling of a very different kind. A considerable portion of the Tories were gradually won over, and it is a remarkable fact that the Act of Settlement was passed by a Tory majority. Religious liberty was extended probably quite as far as the existing condition of opinion would allow. The ancient limits of the constitution which had been grievously infringed in the last two reigns, were reasserted by the Declaration of Rights, and new guarantees of national freedom were enacted, so efficient, and at the same time so moderate, that very few of them were subsequently annulled.

The law limiting the duration of Parliament to three years was, indeed, as we have seen, replaced by the Septennial Act, and three of the clauses of the Act of Settlement were in a few years repealed. That excluding all servants of the Crown from the House of Commons would have destroyed the harmony between the executive and legislative bodies, which is one of the chief advantages of parliamentary government, and by withdrawing the ministers from the Lower House, would have fatally weakened its influence. That compelling every member of the privy council to sign his opinions was thought an excessive restriction on the liberty of statesmen. That forbidding the sovereign to leave the British isles without the consent of Parliament was revoked at the desire of George I. But these were comparatively small matters. The great legislative changes that were effected at the Revolution—the immobility of the judges, the reform of the trials for treason, the liberty of the press, the more efficient control of the income of the sovereign, the excision from the oath of allegiance of the clause which, in direct contradiction to the great charter, asserted that under no pretence whatever might subjects take up arms against their king; the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and the partial toleration of Dissenters in England, have all been justified by history as measures of real and unquestionable progress.

The English Revolution belongs to a class of successful measures of which there are very few examples in history. In most cases where a permanent change has been effected in the government and in the modes of political thinking of a country, this has been mainly because the nation has become ripe for it through the action of general causes. A doctrine which had long been fervently held, and which was interwoven with the social fabric, is sapped by intellectual scepticism, loses its hold on the affections of the people, and becomes unrealised, obsolete, and incredible. An institution which was once useful and honoured has become unsuited to the altered conditions of society. The functions it once discharged are no longer needed, or are discharged more efficiently in other ways, and as modes of thought and life grow up that are not in harmony with it, the reverence that consecrates it slowly ebbs away.

Social and economical causes change the relative importance of classes and professions till the old political arrangements no longer reflect with any fidelity the real disposition of power. Causes of this kind undermine institutions and prepare great changes, and it is only when they have fully done their work that the men arise who strike the final blow, and whose names are associated with the catastrophe. Whoever will study the history of the downfall of the Roman Republic; of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman Empire; of the dissolution of that empire; of the mediæval transition from slavery to serfdom; of the Reformation, or of the French Revolution, may easily convince himself that each of these great changes was the result of a long series of religious, social, political, economical, and intellectual causes, extending over many generations. So eminently is this the case, that some distinguished writers have maintained that the action of special circumstances and of individual genius, efforts, and peculiarities, counts for nothing in the great march of human affairs, and that every successful revolution must be attributed solely to the long train of intellectual influences that prepared and necessitated its triumph.

It is not difficult, however, to show that this, like most very absolute historical generalisations, is an exaggeration, and several instances might be cited in which a slight change in the disposition of circumstances, or in the action of individuals, would have altered the whole course of history. There are, indeed, few streams of tendency, however powerful, that might not, at some early period of their career, have been arrested or deflected. Thus the whole religious and moral sentiment of the most advanced nations of the world has been mainly determined by the influence of that small nation which inhabited Palestine; but there have been periods when it was more than probable that the Jewish race would have been as completely absorbed or extirpated as were the ten tribes, and every trace of the Jewish writings blotted from the world. Not less distinctive, not less unique in its kind, has been the place which the Greek, and especially the Athenian, intellect has occupied in history. It has been the great dynamic agency in European civilisation. Directly or indirectly it has contributed more than any other single influence, to stimulate its energies, to

shape its intellectual type, to determine its political ideals and canons of taste, to impart to it the qualities that distinguish it most widely from the Eastern world. But how much of this influence would have arisen or have survived if, as might easily have happened, the invasion of Xerxes had succeeded, and an Asiatic despotism been planted in Greece? It is a mere question of strategy whether Hannibal, after Cannæ, might not have marched upon Rome and burnt it to the ground, and had he done so, the long train of momentous consequences that flowed from the Roman Empire would never have taken place, and a nation widely different in its position, its character, and its pursuits, would have presided over the developments of civilisation. It is, no doubt, true that the degradation or disintegration of Oriental Christianity assisted the triumph of Mohammedanism; but if Mahomet had been killed in one of the first skirmishes of his career, there is no reason to believe that a great monotheistic and military religion would have been organised in Arabia, destined to sweep with resistless fanaticism over an immense part both of the Pagan and of the Christian world, and to establish itself for many centuries and in three continents as a serious rival to Christianity. As Gibbon truly says, had Charles Martel been defeated at the battle of Poitiers, Mohammedanism would have almost certainly overspread the whole of Gallic and Teutonic Europe, and the victory of the Christians was only gained after several days of doubtful and indecisive struggle. The obscure blunder of some forgotten captain, who perhaps moved his troops to the right when he should have moved them to the left, may have turned the scale, and determined the future of Europe. Even the changes of the French Revolution, prepared as they undoubtedly were by a long train of irresistible causes, might have worn a wholly different complexion had the Duke of Burgundy succeeded Lewis XIV. and directed, with the intelligence, and the liberality that were generally expected from the pupil of Fénelon, the government of his country. Profound and searching changes in the institutions of France were inevitable, but had they been effected peacefully, legally, and gradually, had the shameless scenes of the Regency and of Lewis XV. been avoided, that frenzy of democratic enthusiasm

which has been the most distinctive product of the Revolution, and which has passed, almost like a new religion, into European life, might never have arisen, and the whole Napoleonic episode, with its innumerable consequences, would never have occurred.

The English Revolution is an example, though a less eminent one, of the same kind. It was a movement essentially aristocratic. The whole course of its policy was shaped by a few men who were far in advance of the general sentiments of the nation. The King, in spite of his great abilities, was profoundly unpopular, and his cold and unsympathetic manners, and his manifest dislike to the island over which he reigned, checked all real enthusiasm even among the Whigs. The Church was sullen and discontented, exasperated by the Act of Toleration, which the clergy were anxious to repeal, implacably hostile to the scheme of comprehension, by which William wished to unite the Protestant bodies, and to the purely secular theory of government which triumphed at the Revolution. In the existing state of public opinion it was impossible that any system which the Church disliked could be really popular, and many causes, both just and unjust, contributed to the discontent. The moral feelings of the community were scandalised by the spectacle of a child making war upon her father, by the base treachery of many whom the dethroned sovereign had loaded with benefits, by the tergiversation of multitudes, who, in taking the oaths to a revolutionary Government, were belying the principles which for years they had most strenuously maintained. There was an uneasy consciousness that the Revolution, though singularly unstained by bloodshed and by excess, was far from glorious to the English people. It was effected by a foreign prince with a foreign army. It was rendered possible, or, at least, bloodless, by an amount of aggravated treachery, duplicity, and ingratitude seldom surpassed in history. Besides this, national prosperity had rapidly declined. A great and by no means successful war was entailed upon the nation, and thousands of Englishmen had been mown down by the sword or by disease in Flanders and in Ireland. The lavish sums bestowed on Dutch favourites, the immense subsidies voted to the confederates in the war, the rapid increase of taxation, the creation of a national debt,

and of great standing armies, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the defeat of Steinkirk, when five regiments of Englishmen were cut to pieces by a superior force while whole battalions of allied forces remained passive spectators of the scene, the desolation of Ireland, the massacre of Glencoe, the abandonment of the Darien colonists, the 'rabbling' of about 300 Episcopalian clergymen in Scotland, the Partition Treaty, signed by William without consultation with any English minister except Somers, all added to the flame. The discontent was unreasonably, but not unnaturally, aggravated by a long series of bad harvests. From 1690 to 1699 there was hardly a single year of average prosperity. The loaf which in the last reign had cost threepence rose to ninepence. Great multitudes who had been employed in the woollen manufactories, or in the mines, were turned adrift. In the eight years from 1688 to 1696 it was stated in official documents that the value of the merchandise exported from England sank from 4,086,087*l.* to 2,729,520*l.*, and the Post Office revenue from 76,318*l.* to 58,672*l.* Every shopkeeper and innkeeper bore witness to the increasing poverty. In every part of the kingdom there were accounts of rents being unpaid, of tenants breaking, of impoverished landlords; and alarming bread riots broke out at Worcester, Gloucester, Hereford, Stafford, Northampton, Sudbury, Colchester, and other places.[1]

The most formidable element in this discontent was that hatred of foreigners which was so deeply rooted in the English mind, and which has played a part that can hardly be exaggerated in English history. Hatred of foreign interference lay at the root of that old antipathy to Rome which alone rendered possible the English Reformation. Hatred of the Irish and hatred of the French were leading elements in the popular feeling against James II., while the adherents of the Stuarts continually appealed to the hatred of the Dutch, of the Germans, and of the French refugees. The very name of each of the great parties in the State bears witness to the feeling, for it was at first only an offensive nick-

[1] Somers' *Tracts*, ix. 457, x. 356–358. Short's *Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind, in England* (1767) p. 87. Chalmers' *Estimate*. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, p. 117.

name, deriving its point and its popularity from a national antipathy. The 'Tory' was originally an Irish robber, and the term was applied by Oates to the disbelievers in the Popish plot, was afterwards extended to the Irish Catholic friends of the Duke of York at the time of the Exclusion Bill, and soon became the designation of the whole body of his supporters. The term 'Whig' was a nickname applied to the Scotch Presbyterians. It began at the time when the Cameronians took up arms for their religion, and was derived from the whey, or refuse milk, which their poverty obliged them to use, or, according to another version, from 'Whiggam,' a word employed by Scotch cattle-drovers of the west in driving their horses.[1] In many cases these national jealousies might be justified by a real national danger, but there lay behind them a vast mass of unreasoning prejudice which the insular position of England made exceptionally strong, and which was one of the most powerful forces in English politics.

In the latter Stuart reigns this sentiment was strongly on the side of the Whigs. The sale of Dunkirk to France, the shameful day when the Dutch fleet sailed unmolested into the Thames, burnt the shipping at Chatham, and menaced the security of the capital, and, still more, the growing subordination of England to the policy of Lewis XIV., had irritated to the very highest degree the national sentiment. England, which had shattered the power of France at Agincourt, Crecy, and Poitiers, which under Elizabeth and Cromwell had been feared or honoured in every quarter of the Continent, had now sunk into complete disrepute, and followed humbly in the wake of her ancient rival. Year by year the power and the ambition of Lewis increased, and threatened to overshadow all the liberties of Europe, but no danger could rouse the English sovereign from his ignoble torpor, and both he and his ministers were suspected with only too good reason of being the paid vassals of the French King.

It may easily be understood how galling such a subserviency to foreigners must have been to large classes who were very indifferent to questions of constitutions and

[1] North's *Examen*, p. 321. Burnet's *Hist. of his own time* (folio ed.), i. 43.

parliaments, and the indignation was greatly increased by the close connection between the foreign policy of England and the interests of Protestantism in Europe. In England Protestantism was the religion of so large and so energetic a majority of the people that any attempt to overthrow it was hopeless, but on the Continent its prospects at the time of the Revolution were extremely gloomy. For several generations over a great part of Europe the conflict had been steadily against it, and there was much reason to believe that it might sink into complete political impotence. Partly by the natural reaction that follows a great movement of enthusiasm, partly by the superior attraction of a pictorial form of worship, partly through the skilful organisation of the Society of Jesus, and still more by a systematic policy of repression, Protestantism had almost disappeared in many countries, in which, some fifty years after the Reformation, it appeared to have taken the firmest root. Bohemia had once been mainly Protestant. In Hungary, Transylvania, Poland, Austria proper, and even Bavaria, Protestants had formed either a majority, or nearly half of the population. In France they had occupied great towns, and organised powerful armies. They might once have been found in numbers in the northern provinces of Italy, in Flanders, in Cologne, Bamberg, Wurzburg, and Ems. In all these quarters the ascendancy of Catholicism was now almost undivided, and the balance of political power was immensely in its favour. Spain, though in a state of decadence, was still the greatest colonial power in the world. The Emperor and the King of France were by far the greatest military powers on the Continent, and the Emperor was persecuting Protestants in Hungary, while Lewis XIV. made it a main object of his home policy to drive them from France, and a main object of his foreign policy to crush Holland, which was then the most powerful bulwark of Protestantism on the Continent. Of the Protestant States Sweden was too poor and too remote to exercise much permanent influence, and she had for many years been little more than a satellite of France; Holland had been raised under a succession of able leaders to an importance much beyond her natural resources, but her very existence as an independent power was menaced by her too powerful neighbour;

England had sunk since the Restoration into complete insignificance, and a bigoted Catholic had now mounted her throne. The Peace of Westphalia had been more than once violated in Germany to the detriment of the Protestants, and several petty German princes had already abandoned the faith. That great Protestant country which is now Prussia, was then the insignificant Electorate of Brandenburg, and was but just beginning, under an Elector of great ability, to emerge from obscurity. That great country, which now forms the United States of America, consisted then of a few rude and infant colonies, exercising no kind of influence beyond their borders, and although the policy of Roman Catholic nations was by no means invariably subservient to the Church, the movement of religious scepticism which now makes the preponderance of intelligence and energy in every Roman Catholic country hostile to the priests had not yet arisen. From almost every point of the compass dark and threatening clouds were gathering around the Protestant cause, and the year 1685 was pronounced the most fatal in all its annals. In February an English king declared himself a Papist. In June Charles, the Elector Palatine, dying without issue, the electoral dignity passed to the bigoted Popish house of Neuburg. In October Lewis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantes, and began that ferocious persecution which completed the work of St. Bartholomew in France. In December the Duke of Savoy was induced by French persuasion to put an end to the toleration of the Vaudois.[1]

Happily for the interests of the world the religious difference was not the sole or the chief line of national division, and the terror that was excited by the ambition of France enlisted a great part of Catholic Europe on the side of William. The King of Spain was decidedly in his favour, and the Spanish ambassador at the Hague is said to have ordered masses in his chapel for the success of the expedition.[2] The Emperor employed all his influence at Rome on the same side, and by singular good fortune the Pope himself looked with favour on the Revo-

[1] See a striking picture of the light in which this struggle appeared to contemporaries in the Somers' *Tracts*, ix. 593–595; Calamy's *Life*, i. 125–126; Kemble's *State Papers*, p. xli., xlii.

[2] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. p. 301.

lution. Odescalchi, who, under the name of Innocent XI., had mounted the Papal throne in 1676, was a man of eminent virtue and moderation, and he had, in conjunction with a considerable body of the English Catholics, steadily disapproved of the violent and unconstitutional means by which James, under the advice of Father Petre, was endeavouring to bring the English Catholics to power. He appears to have seen the probability of a reaction, and he wished the King to restrict himself to endeavouring to obtain toleration for his coreligionists, and the English Catholics to abstain as much as possible from political ambition and from every course that could arouse the popular indignation. He had directed the general of the Jesuits to rebuke Father Petre for his ambition, and he positively refused the urgent request of James to raise his favourite to the episcopate and to the purple. On the other hand he looked with extreme apprehension and dislike upon the policy of Lewis XIV. In the interests of Europe he clearly saw that the overwhelming power and the insatiable ambition of the French king formed the greatest danger of the time, and that the complete subserviency of England was a main element of his strength. In the interests of the Church he dreaded the attempts of Lewis, while constituting himself the great representative and protector of Catholicism in Europe, to make himself almost as absolute in ecclesiastical as in temporal affairs. The French king had for some time shown a peculiar jealousy of papal authority, and a peculiar desire to humiliate it. In a former pontificate he had made use for this purpose of a quarrel which had arisen between some Corsican guards of the Pope and some Frenchmen attached to the embassy at Rome, had seized Avignon, had threatened to invade Rome, and had compelled Alexander VII. to make the most abject apologies, to engage for the future to admit no Corsicans into his service, and even to erect a monument commemorating the transaction.[1] Soon after the accession of Innocent XI., the feud again broke out, and it was so bitter that the papal court began to look upon the French king as the worst enemy to the Church. The antagonism arose on the question of the right, or the alleged right, of the French

[1] De Flassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iii. 292–302.

sovereign to appoint to ecclesiastical benefices in France during the vacancy of the episcopal sees. The claim had long been contested by the Pope, but it was admitted by the French clergy, who were now closely allied to the sovereign, and were looking forward to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The dispute led to the famous articles of 1682, by which the French Church denied that the Pope possessed by Divine right any temporal jurisdiction, declared its adhesion to the decrees by which the Council of Constance asserted the supremacy of general councils, and maintained that the rules and customs of the Gallican Church must prevail in France, that the apostolic power should only be exercised in accordance with the canons, and that even on questions of dogma the papal decrees were fallible, unless they had been confirmed by the general adoption of the Church. These articles, which were the foundation of Gallican liberties, were published by order of the king, and registered by the parliaments and universities, while the Pope protested strongly against them, and began to refuse bulls to those whom the king nominated to vacant bishoprics.

A still more bitter quarrel speedily followed. The Pope desired to abolish the scandalous right of sanctuary, by virtue of which the precincts of the hotels of the ambassadors of the Great Powers at Rome had become nests of smugglers, bankrupts, and thieves, and as all the Great Powers except France readily acquiesced in the reform, he announced his intention of receiving no ambassador who would not renounce the shameful privilege. Lewis, however, determined to maintain it. Contrary to the expressed desire of the Pope, he sent an ambassador to Rome, with instructions to assert the right of sanctuary, and he directed him to enter Rome as if it were a conquered town, escorted by a large body of French troops. The Pope refused to receive the ambassador, excommunicated him, and placed the French church at Rome, in which he had worshipped, under interdict, while the King retaliated by arresting the Nuncio at Paris. Nearly at the same time the important electorate and archbishopric of Cologne became vacant, and the Pope opposed a favourite scheme of Lewis by refusing his assent to the promotion to these dignities of the French candidate, Cardinal Furstenberg. Lewis, on the other hand, accused the Pope of

conspiring with the enemies of France. He espoused the claims of the Duke of Parma to some parts of the Papal dominions, seized Avignon, and threatened to send an army to Italy. Under these circumstances Innocent was fully disposed to listen with favour to any scheme which promised to repress the ambition and arrest the growing power of the French king. He was assured that William would grant toleration to the English Catholics, and he actually favoured the enterprise with his influence, and it is said even with his money.[1] The effect of the Revolution, in some degree at least, corresponded with the expectation of the allies. The balance of power was redressed. The whole weight of English influence was thrown into the scale against France, and a servitude which had incessantly galled the national sentiment of England was removed.

Very soon, however, the antipathy to foreigners began to act against the Whigs. It was not simply that William was a foreign prince, who had overthrown a sovereign of English birth. It was not simply that he never concealed his partiality for his own country, that he surrounded himself with Dutch guards and with Dutch favourites, whom he rewarded with lavish profusion. There lay beyond this another and a deeper complaint. William was the ruler of a continental State placed in a position of extreme and constant danger. He was above all the head of a great European confederation against France, and he valued his accession to the English throne chiefly as enabling him to employ the resources of England in the struggle. The Tory party soon began to complain with great plausibility, and with not a little truth, that English interests were comparatively lost sight of, that English blood and English treasure were expended to secure a stronger barrier for Holland, that the Revolution had deprived England of the inestimable advantage of her insular position and involved her inextricably in continental complications. For several generations it became the maxim of Tory statesmen that England should, as far as possible, isolate herself from continental embarrassments,

[1] *Memoires du Maréchal de Berwick*, i. 17–18. Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. 301–302. Dalrymple's *Memoirs of Great Britain*, part i. bk. v. Burnet's *Own Times*, i. 661–662, 706–707, 772–774. De Flassan's *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iv. 94–105. See too Ranke's *Hist. of England*, xviii. 1.

and, if compelled to wage war, should do so only on her natural element, the sea.[1] After the Peace of Ryswick especially, this feeling gathered strength, and it became evident that the Tory party, which now rose to power, and which undoubtedly represented the true national sentiment, was resolved to pursue a steady policy of isolation and of peace. The army, to the bitter indignation of the king, was reduced to 10,000, and afterwards to 7,000 men. The sailors were reduced from 40,000 to 8,000. Even the Dutch guards were summarily dismissed, and these measures were taken at a time when a danger of the greatest magnitude was looming on the horizon. Charles II. of Spain, was sinking rapidly to the grave, leaving no child to inherit his vast dominions, and there were three rival claimants for the succession. The nearest in point of birth was the Dauphin, the son of the elder sister of the Spanish king, but his claim was barred by a formal renunciation of all right of succession made by his mother when she married Lewis XIV., and ratified with great solemnity by the oath and the word of honour of her husband when he accepted the treaty of the Pyrenees. Next to the Dauphin came the electoral prince of Bavaria, whose mother was the daughter of the younger sister of the Spanish king, but in this case also an express renunciation barred the title. The third competitor was the Emperor, who could claim only as the son of Charles's aunt, but his claim was barred by no renunciation. The Emperor waived his claim in favour of his second son, the Archduke Charles, but beyond this he would make no concession, though France was prepared to oppose to the last, and England was far from desiring, so great an increase of power to the House of Hapsburg. The electoral prince of Bavaria was still in infancy; his father was the sovereign of an inconsiderable State, and unable to enforce his claims. The queen mother of Spain, who had warmly favoured this disposition of the crown, died in 1696, and although William would gladly have supported it, neither the Austrians nor the French would acquiesce in the arrangement.

[1] As Bolingbroke tersely expressed it, 'Our true interests require that we should take few engagements on the Continent, and never those of making a land war unless the conjunction be such that nothing less than the weight of Great Britain can prevent the scales of power from being quite overturned.'—*Marchmont Papers*, ii. 314.

The Dauphin resigned his claim in favour of his second son, the Duke of Anjou, but Austria was desperately opposed to his succession, and William considered so great an aggrandisement of the House of Bourbon fatal to the freedom of Europe and to the whole policy of his life.

It is not necessary here to relate at length how Lewis and William endeavoured to meet the difficulty by the treaty of partition of 1698, providing that on the death of the Spanish king the Milanese should pass to the Archduke Charles, the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Tuscan ports, the marquisate of Finale, and the province of Guipuscoa to the Dauphin, and the remainder of the Spanish dominions to the electoral prince of Bavaria; how, on the death of the last-named prince a second partition treaty was signed in 1700, granting Spain, the Spanish Netherlands, and the Indies, to the Archduke, increasing the compensation to France by the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar, and transferring the Duke of Lorraine to the Milanese; how these treaties were made without communication with the sovereign and statesmen of the Spanish monarchy, which was so unceremoniously disposed of, without the assent of the Emperor, who refused to diminish any of his pretensions, without any real regard for the opinion of English ministers, though an English army would probably be required to enforce their provisions; how when the project became known in Spain a fierce storm of indignation convulsed the land, and the dying king, who had once favoured the Bavarian succession, was induced, after many vacillations, to endeavour to save his kingdom from dissolution by bequeathing the whole to the Duke of Anjou; and how upon the death of Charles, in the November of 1700, Lewis tore to shreds the treaty he had signed, and boldly accepted the bequest for his grandson. What we have especially to notice is the attitude of parties in England. The whole Tory party, which was now rising to the ascendant, steadily censured the interference of England in the contest. When the projects of partition were announced they were received with the severest disapprobation, and when the will of Charles was published the Tories strenuously urged that England should acquiesce. 'It grieves me to the soul,' wrote William with extreme bitterness, 'that almost everyone rejoices that France

has preferred the will to the treaty.'[1] Independently of the gross injustice of measures for dividing by force a great monarchy which had given no provocation to its neighbours, it was contended that the terms of the partition treaty would have given France a most dangerous ascendancy, that the possession of Naples and the Tuscan ports would have made her supreme in the Mediterranean, that the possession of Guipuscoa would have given her the trade of the West Indies and of South America, and have placed Spain at her mercy in time of war, that the acquisition of so long a line of valuable seaboard, in addition to what she already possessed, would have imparted an immense impulse to her naval power. The dangers resulting from the will were, it was said, much less. The strong national sentiment of the Spanish people, who have been pre-eminently jealous of foreign interference, might fairly be relied on to counteract the French sympathies of their sovereign; and Spanish jealousy had been rendered peculiarly sensitive by the participation of Lewis in the partition treaties. Nor was it likely that a prince, placed at a very early age on a great throne, surrounded by Spanish influences, and courted by every Power in Europe, would be characterised by an excessive deference to his grandfather. Above all, it was a matter of vital importance to England that she should enjoy a period of repose after her long and exhausting war, and that the system of standing armies, of national debts, and of foreign subsidies, should come to an end.

These were the views of the Tory party, and there can be little question that they would have prevailed, in spite of the opposition of the king, had Lewis, at this critical moment, acted with common prudence and common moderation. There was one point on the Continent, however, which no patriotic Englishman, whether Whig or Tory, could look upon with indifference. The line of Spanish fortresses which protected the Netherlands from the ambition of France was of vital importance to the security of Holland, and if Holland passed into French hands it was more than doubtful whether English independence would long survive. To preserve these fortresses from French aggrandisement had been for generations a main end of English policy; during the last fifty years torrents of English

[1] Hardwicke's State Papers, ii. 396.

blood had been shed to secure them; and with this object, William had agreed with the Elector of Bavaria, who governed them as the representative of the Spanish King, that they should be garrisoned in part with Dutch troops. Propositions for the absolute cession of the Spanish Netherlands to the Elector of Bavaria had been made, but for various reasons abandoned; but the maintenance of the Dutch garrisons was of extreme importance, and if, as was alleged, the transfer of the Spanish monarchy to the grandson of Lewis XIV. did not mean the subserviency of Spain to French policy, it was on this, beyond all other questions, that the most careful neutrality should have been shown. Lewis, however, was quite determined that these garrisons should cease, and he at the same time saw the possibility of forcing the Dutch to recognise the validity of the will of Charles II. With the assent of the Spanish authorities he sent a French army into the Spanish Netherlands, occupied the whole line of Spanish fortresses in the name of his grandson, and in a time of perfect peace detained the Dutch garrison prisoners until Holland had recognised the title of the new sovereign to the Spanish throne.

It would be difficult to exaggerate either the arrogance or the folly of this act. The Tory party, which in the beginning of 1701 was ascendant in England, was bitterly hostile to William; the partition treaties excited throughout the country deep and general discontent, and the ardent wish of the English people was to detach their country as far as possible from continental complications, and to secure a long and permanent peace on the basis of a frank acceptance of the will of Charles II. But it was impossible that any English party, however hostile to William, could see with indifference the whole line of Spanish fortresses, including Luxemburg, Mons, Namur, Charleroi, and the seaports of Nieuport and Ostend occupied by the French, the whole English policy of the last war overthrown without a blow, and the transfer of the Spanish monarchy to Philip immediately employed in the interests of French ambition: When the Dutch formally applied for the succour which, under such circumstances, England was bound by treaty to furnish, both Houses of Parliament declared their determination to fulfil their obligations, and English troops were actually sent to Holland;

but still several months of anxious negotiation ensued, and on the side of England there was a most sincere and earnest desire to avert the war. Party spirit ran furiously at home. The two Houses were engaged in bitter quarrels, and the Tories lost no opportunity of irritating the king. The Commons ordered Portland, Somers, Halifax, and Orford to be impeached; they censured in the severest terms the treaties of partition, and the Tory ministers compelled William, even after the French aggression on the Dutch, to recognise Philip as king of Spain. The Act of Settlement, which was made necessary by the death of the young Duke of Gloucester, the last surviving child of Anne, secured, indeed, the crown to the Protestant House of Brunswick, but surrounded it with limitations extremely offensive to the king. The House of Commons, which was so violently Tory, had been but just elected, and though a warlike spirit was slowly growing in the country, it was not only possible, but easy to have allayed it. Had the French sovereign consented to re-establish the Dutch garrisons in some at least of the frontier towns, or had he consented to the transfer of the Spanish Netherlands either to the Emperor or to Holland, the peace of Europe might have been preserved. But he was seized at this moment with what appeared a judicial blindness. He did not desire war, but he imagined that his power would intimidate all opponents. If a war broke out, the great resources of France and Spain would be united. France had secured the alliance of the Dukes of Savoy and of Mantua in Italy, of the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne in Germany, and had opened what appeared to be promising negotiations with Portugal. The Emperor was embarrassed by troubles produced in Hungary by Rákóczy, the bravest and most popular of Hungarian chiefs, and in Germany itself he had aroused much jealousy among the princes of the Empire, by creating a new electorate for Hanover, and by raising the electorate of Brandenburg into the kingdom of Prussia. The King of England seemed paralysed by the opposition of his Parliament, while the fortresses that were the key to Holland were in French hands. Under these circumstances, Lewis persuaded himself that there was nothing to fear. He released the Dutch troops, indeed, on obtaining a recognition of the title of his grandson, and he

offered to withdraw his troops from the fortresses they had seized as soon as the Spaniards were able fully to garrison them, but he would give no further security to Holland. The light in which he looked upon events was very clearly shown in his speech to the constable of Castille in the beginning of 1701. 'The French and Spanish nations,' he said, 'are so united that they will henceforth be only one. . . . . My grandson, at the head of the Spaniards, will defend the French. I, at the head of the French, will defend the Spaniards.'[1] The Emperor was already in arms. A great change passed over public opinion in England. It was chiefly shown in the House of Lords, but it appeared also; though much less strongly, in the House of Commons, and on the 7th of September, 1701, William concluded the triple alliance of England, Holland, and the Emperor, for the purpose of recovering the Low Countries from the hands of the French, securing them as a barrier to protect the United Provinces from the French, and redressing the balance of power by obtaining for the Emperor the Spanish dominions in Italy.

Such was the foundation of that great alliance which for a time brought the French power to the lowest depth. It was strengthened in 1702 by the accession of the new kingdom of Prussia, and afterwards of nearly the whole Empire, and in the following year by the accession of Portugal, and by the change of sides of the Duke of Savoy. Its prospects of success were at first, however, very gloomy. William was now dying. The Tory party, which was bitterly hostile to him and exceedingly reluctant to engage in the war, had a large majority in the Commons. War was not yet declared, and the treaty of alliance provided that two months should pass before any active steps of hostility were taken. It was not improbable that before that time the king, who was the soul of the policy of war, would be in his grave, and it was certain that the alliance itself could easily have been broken up by very moderate concessions. The jealousy between England and Holland, the profound dislike of the ruling party in the former to continental wars, the difference of aim between the Emperor, who claimed the whole

[1] De Flassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iv. 203.

Spanish dominions, and the Dutch and English, who desired only to secure Holland and to restore the balance of power by a partition, threatened to prevent all energetic and united action, and it was more than doubtful whether the Commons would vote adequate subsidies, when Lewis himself, by an act of gratuitous folly, changed the whole aspect of affairs. Only ten days after the triple alliance was signed James II. died, and Lewis, who had bound himself by the peace of Ryswick to take no step calculated to disturb William in his possession of the throne of England, resolved, in spite of the earnest entreaty of his ministers, to recognise the Pretender as king of England. The effect on the English nation was instantaneous. The storm which had for some months been slowly gathering burst into a hurricane. The attempt of a French king to prescribe to the English people the sovereign whom they should obey touched acutely that sentiment of national jealousy of foreign interference which was then the strongest of English sentiments, and William, by dissolving parliament while the resentment was at its height, overthrew the Tory power and obtained a large majority pledged to the policy of war.

William died on the 8th of March, 1702. He did not live to declare the war, but he lived to fill his ministry with statesmen who were favourable to it, and to see the new House of Commons carry addresses and vote military supplies which made it inevitable. The sudden fluctuation of the national sentiments in 1701 is very remarkable. In that year there had been the most unusual spectacle of two new parliaments violently antagonistic in their policy. The parliament which met for the first time in February was vehemently and aggressively Tory. The parliament which met in December contained a large majority of Whigs. The change, however, was in reality more superficial than might appear. The strong national jealousy of foreign rulers, and foreign politics, and foreign interference, which was usually the strength of the Tory party, was as vehement as ever, though it had for the moment been enlisted on the side of the Whigs. It was no attachment to the Dutch sovereign, no desire to alter the disposition of power on the Continent in the general interests of Europe that animated the electors, but solely resentment at French interference; and few English sovereigns

have ever sunk to the tomb less regretted by the mass of the English nation than William III.

With such sentiments prevailing in the nation, it is not surprising that the accession of Anne should have been followed by a violent reflux of Tory feeling. The queen herself was intensely Tory in her sympathies, and though intellectually she was below the average of her subjects, she was in many respects well fitted to revive the party. Her character, though somewhat peevish and very obstinate, was pure, generous, simple, and affectionate, and she had displayed, under bereavements far more numerous than fall to the share of most, a touching piety that endeared her to her people. Her part in the Revolution had been comparatively small. She was, as she stated in her first speech from the throne, 'entirely English' at heart, and the strongest and deepest passion of her nature was attachment to the English Church. Though promising her protection to the Dissenters, she looked with secret horror on the toleration they enjoyed, and her own severe orthodoxy had been undimmed in the Popish court of her father, and in the latitudinarian atmosphere of the Revolution. Her reverence for ecclesiastical authority was early shown when she rebuked her chaplain at Windsor for administering to her the sacrament before the clergy;[1] her zeal against the Dissenters, when she compelled her husband, though himself a Lutheran, holding high office under the Crown, to vote for the bill against occasional conformity; her care for the interests of the Church, when she surrendered to it those firstfruits and tenths which had originally been claimed by the Pope, and had been afterwards appropriated by the Crown; her generosity, when she devoted 100,000*l.* out of the first year's income of her civil list, to alleviate the public burdens. In the eyes of the upholders of Divine right, she was as near a legitimate sovereign as it was then possible for a Protestant to be, and it was felt that her own sympathies would be entirely with the legitimate cause, but for her stronger affection for the English Church. In this respect she represented with singular fidelity the feelings of her people, and she became the provisional object of much of that peculiar attachment which is usually bestowed only on a sovereign whose title

[1] Coke's *Detection*.

is beyond dispute. It was also a happy circumstance for the glory of her reign, though not for the Tory party, that the wife of the greatest living Englishman exercised at this time an almost absolute empire over the royal mind. A great war was inevitable and imminent, and Marlborough became almost omnipotent in the State. Within a few days of the accession of the sovereign he was nominated Knight of the Garter; he was made Captain-General of the Forces, and was sent to Holland on a special mission to ratify the new alliance against France, while his wife was intrusted with the management of the privy purse, and made groom of the stole, mistress of the robes, and ranger of Windsor Park. Godolphin, whose son had married the daughter of Marlborough, and who was bound to Marlborough in the closest friendship, became Lord Treasurer. He had been actively engaged in political life since the first parliament of the Restoration, and his long career had been on the whole singularly unsullied at a time and under circumstances when political integrity was extremely rare. With the exception of Halifax, he was incontestably the foremost financier of his age; an old, wary, taciturn, plodding, unobtrusive, and moderate man, who, though he had voted in turn for the Exclusion Bill and for the regency, had won the confidence both of James and William, and who without any strong convictions, any charm of manners, or any brilliancy or fascination of intellect, had more than once stood in the first line of party warfare. He was now attached, though without fanaticism, to the Tories; and his experience, his prudence, his administrative talents, and his respectable and conciliatory character, made him well fitted to preside over the Government. The ministry was rapidly reorganised by the appointment of Tories to most of the leading places. Howe, the bitterest assailant of William, was now called to the Privy Council, and made one of the Paymasters of the Forces. Nottingham, who of all statesmen was most dear to the High Church party, was made one of the Secretaries of State, his colleague being Sir Charles Hedges. Harcourt, the ablest Tory lawyer, and Seymour, the most influential Tory country gentleman in the Lower House, were made respectively Solicitor-General and Comptroller of the Household. Lord Pembroke became Lord President, Lord Bradford, treasurer of

the household, and Lord Normanby, who was soon after created Duke of Buckingham, Privy Seal. Wright continued to be Chancellor, and Rochester Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The great Whig names of Somers, Orford, and Halifax were omitted from the Privy Council. Prince George, the husband of the Queen, was gratified by the title of Generalissimo of the Forces, and he was also very injudiciously made High Admiral, and thus placed at the head of the naval administration. The House of Commons, in accordance with the law, was dissolved within six months of the death of the last sovereign, and the constituencies, which at the close of the preceding year had sent in a decided Whig majority, now returned a House in which the Tories were nearly double the number of the Whigs.

The victory of the party was complete, but it was very transient, and the exigencies of foreign policy again speedily modified the home policy of England. It was a strange fortune that bequeathed to the Tory party, in the very moment of its triumph, a Whig war, and the great general who rose to power had the strongest personal reasons for promoting it. William, who had been reconciled to him at the close of his reign, had taken him with him on his last journey to Holland, and had given him the chief part in negotiating the triple alliance. Independently, therefore, of all considerations of military ambition, Marlborough was personally committed to the policy of war. Nor, indeed, was it possible to avoid it. The engagements of the allies were too explicit; the feeling aroused in England by the recognition of the Pretender was too strong; the dangers arising from the will of Charles II., as disclosed by the proceedings of Lewis in the Netherlands, were too glaring for any English party to remain passive. The Tories felt this, and though it was one of the main objects of their policy to withdraw the country from Continental complications, they in general concurred in the declaration of war which was issued on the fourth of May. Dissensions, however, speedily arose. Rochester, who had been regarded as the leader of the party, was bitterly disappointed at not obtaining a more influential place than that of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The second son of the great Lord Clarendon, and consequently the uncle of the Queen, he had long viewed with

great jealousy the ascendancy the Marlboroughs had obtained over her mind. His Toryism was of a very different complexion from that of Marlborough and Godolphin, and he wished to push the victory of the party to its extreme consequences, expelling the few Whigs who remained from the former administration. Nottingham, with several other members of the party, dissented for less personal reasons. They had been forced reluctantly into a war which had been prepared by William; but they desired at least that it should be carried on within the narrowest limits; that England should, as much as possible, restrict herself to defensive operations and to the Spanish Netherlands, that she should enter into the struggle not as a principal, but as an auxiliary. They objected to every vigorous measure that was taken—to the march of the English troops into Germany, to the encouragement given to the Protestant insurrection of the Cevennes. It was not likely that a Government virtually ruled by a great and ambitious general would yield to such views, and Godolphin and Marlborough, finding their foreign policy most cordially supported by the Whigs, began from this time steadily to gravitate to that party. The defection of Rochester in 1702, and of Nottingham in 1704; the dismissal in the same year of Lord Jersey and Sir Edward Seymour; the dismissal of the Duke of Buckingham from the Privy Seal in 1705, changed the whole spirit of the Government, while the great popularity of the war produced a corresponding change in the spirit of the country. There were many reasons why this war should be regarded in a light wholly different from that of William. From the time when Lewis recognised the Pretender, it became a truly national war, produced by a great outburst of national resentment. The English troops were now commanded by an English general, and by a general of whose transcendant genius his countrymen were soon justly proud. The army, which during the greater part of the last war was still raw and almost undisciplined, had now acquired the qualities of veterans,[1] and the nation was soon

[1] 'What I remember to have heard the Duke of Marlborough say before he went to take on him the command of the army in the Low Countries in 1702 proved true. The French misreckoned very much if they made the same comparison between their troops and those of their enemies, as they

excited by the struggle and intoxicated by the cup of military glory.

This change in the political character of the ministry at a time when its two principal figures remained the same, is very remarkable. Both Godolphin and Marlborough, however, were wholly destitute of strong party feelings, and both of them desired a ministry in which each party was represented. The first was naturally a very moderate Tory; the second held, as far as possible, aloof from party contests. He had acted in turn with each party, and he had several private grounds of sympathy with the Whigs. His wife had decided Whig leanings; his son-in-law, Sunderland, was one of the most violent members of the Whig party; and when Marlborough was made Duke, in 1702, the Tory majority in the House of Commons had rejected the proposal of the Queen to annex a grant of 5,000*l.* a year for ever to the title. The strong Tory sympathies of the Queen, and the great outburst of Church enthusiasm that followed her accession had given the administration a more exclusively Tory character than either of its chiefs desired, and they had no sympathy with that large section of their followers who were endeavouring to carry matters to extremities, who desired to expel the Whigs even from the most subordinate offices, and who would gladly have repealed the Toleration Act. The fierce party spirit shown by the Tory party towards the close of the preceding reign had deeply injured its reputation with moderate men, and there were signs that a similar spirit was again animating it. The bill against occasional conformity was supported by all the weight of the Crown; a manifest censure upon the late king was implied in the resolution complimenting Marlborough on having 'signally retrieved the ancient honour and glory of the English nation;' the attitude of the House of Commons to the House of Lords, in which the Whig element preponderated, was extremely offensive; and it is probable that a most dangerous reaction would have ensued but for the counteracting influence of the war.

had made in precedent wars. Those that had been opposed to them in the last, were raw for the most part when it began, the British particularly, but they were disciplined, if I may say so, by their defeats. They were grown to be victorious at the peace of Ryswic.' — Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the Hist. of Europe.*

During the first two years, however, there was but little to arouse enthusiasm. In July 1701, before England had engaged in the war, Eugene, at the head of an Austrian army, entered Italy by the valley of the Trent, defeated the French at Carpi, on the Adige, and compelled Catinat to retreat beyond the Oglio, and in the June of the following year the Imperial and Dutch forces succeeded, after a long and bloody siege, in capturing Kaiserswerth on the Rhine. It had been put into the hands of the French by the Elector of Cologne, and, as it exposed both the circle of Westphalia and the dominions of the States to invasion, it was of great military importance. In September 1702 the still more important fortress of Landau was taken by the Prince of Baden. Marlborough commanded an army of invasion in the Spanish Guelderland, but he was thwarted and trammelled at every step by his Dutch and German allies; and, though he took the line of fortresses along the Meuse, captured Bonn, and subdued Limburg and the whole bishopric of Liége, he fought no pitched battle, and gained no very brilliant success. The only regular battle in the Netherlands was at Eckeren, near Antwerp, where a Dutch detachment, commanded by the Dutch general Obdam, was surprised and defeated by a very superior French force commanded by Boufflers. In Spain, the failure of an English expedition against Cadiz was redeemed by the capture or destruction of a large fleet of Spanish galleons under the escort of some French frigates in the Bay of Vigo; but in Italy, on the Danube, and on the Rhine, the advantage lay decidedly with the French. Eugene failed in his attempt to take Cremona, though he succeeded in capturing Villeroy, the French commander; he was compelled to raise the siege of Mantua, and the battle of Luzzara, in which he encountered Vendome, was indecisive in its issue. Visconti was defeated by Vendome in the battle of San Vittoria, and the defection of the Duke of Savoy from the French was punished by the occupation of a great part of his territory. In Germany several serious disasters befell the allies. The Prince of Baden was defeated by Villars in the battle of Friedlingen, and the Count de Stirum in the battle of Hochstadt. Ulm was seized by the Elector of Bavaria, who was in alliance with the French. Brisach was captured by the Duke of Burgundy. Tallard,

having defeated the Germans in the battle of Spirbach, recaptured Landau, and Augsburg was taken by the Elector of Bavaria. On both sides the dangers of foreign war were soon complicated by those of rebellion at home, for the atrocious persecution of the Protestants had roused a fierce storm in the Cevennes, while in Hungary the insurrection, which had been for a short time suppressed, broke out anew. The fortunes of the war were not fully changed till 1704, when Marlborough, in spite of innumerable obstacles from his own allies, marched to the Danube, and having broken the Bavarian lines near Donauwerth, succeeded, in combination with Eugene, in striking a fatal blow at the power of France. That year was indeed one of the most glorious in the military annals of England. By the great victory of Blenheim, the united forces of the French and Bavarians were hopelessly shattered. The prestige of the French arms received a shock from which it never recovered during the war. The conquests in Germany during the preceding years were all recovered, and the French being driven headlong from Germany, Bavaria was compelled to cede all her strong places to the Emperor, and to withdraw from her alliance with France. Lorraine and Alsace were both seriously menaced by the occupation of Trèves, and by the capture of Landau, whilst in another region Rooke planted the British flag on the rock of Gibraltar, from which the most desperate and most persevering efforts have been unable to displace it.

It was inevitable that such success should strengthen the party especially associated with the war, and the changed spirit of the Government was shown by its attitude towards the Occasional Conformity Bill. In 1702 the Court had warmly and ostentatiously supported it; in 1703 it was coldly neutral. The Tories were divided on the question whether to tack it to a bill of supply in order to overcome the opposition of the Lords, and at the end of 1704 this question gave rise to a great schism in their ranks. The clergy, on the other hand, who had expected the speedy repeal of the Toleration Act, were furious at the change. The cry of 'Church in danger!' was raised, and a fierce ecclesiastical agitation began. At Cambridge the opponents of the Occasional Conformity Bill were shooted by the students. At Oxford, which had so long prided

itself on its loyalty, a weather-cock was erected, bearing the Queen's motto *semper eadem*, with the translation 'worse and worse.'[1] The Lower House of Convocation rang with complaints of the conduct of the bishops, who usually leaned to counsels of moderation; of the administration of baptism by Dissenting ministers in private houses; of the schools and seminaries in which the Dissenters educated their young; of the hardship of obliging the parochial clergy to administer the Sacrament as a qualification for office to notorious schismatics. The Church was described in many pulpits as on the brink of destruction, and the ministers were accused of treacherously alienating the Queen from its interests. The country, however, was still under the spell of the victories of Marlborough. The popularity of the war, the influence of the ministers, who leaned more and more to the Whig side, and the division of the Tories, together produced another great revulsion of power, and at the election of 1705 a large Whig majority was returned to Parliament.

The Government was still in a great degree Tory. Harley, one of the most sagacious leaders, and St. John, the most brilliant orator of the party, had been appointed, the first, Secretary of State, and the second, Secretary of War, at the time of the dismissal of Nottingham. The Whig leaders were still out of office, though several less prominent members of the party were incorporated in the ministry. Prior to the general election, the Privy Seal had been taken from the Duke of Buckingham, who was conspicuous among the Tories, and given to the Whig Duke of Newcastle, and Walpole obtained a subordinate office in the Admiralty. The election of 1705 naturally aided the transformation, and by the Marlborough influence the Queen was very reluctantly induced to take a step which gave a decisive ascendancy to the Whig element in the Cabinet. The Tory Chancellor Wright, who had been appointed at the dismissal of Somers in 1700, was turned out of an office for which he was notoriously unfit, and the place was given to Cowper, one of the most eminent of the Whigs. The Tory party, exasperated with the Queen for yielding to the pressure, brought in a motion wholly repugnant to their ordinary politics, and intended chiefly to be personally offensive to the sovereign, petitioning her to

[1] Oldmixon, p. 380.

invite over the Electress Sophia, the heir presumptive, to reside in the country. It was, of course, defeated, but it served to shake the sympathies of the Queen, and the Whigs availed themselves skilfully of the occasion to carry a regency bill, still further strengthening that Hanoverian succession for which their rivals had very little real predilection. It provided that, on the death of the reigning sovereign, the government should pass into the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Keeper, Lord Treasurer, Lord President, Lord Privy Seal, Lord High Admiral, and the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, for the time being; that with them should be joined a list of persons named by the successor to the throne, in a sealed paper, of which three copies were to be previously sent to England; one to be deposited with the Archbishop of Canterbury, another with the Lord Keeper, a third with his own minister residing in England; and that Parliament was to be immediately convoked and empowered to sit for six months. At the same time, in order if possible to allay the ecclesiastical outcry, resolutions were carried in both Houses affirming that whoever asserted or insinuated that the Church was in danger was an enemy to the Queen and to the kingdom.

The ministry of Godolphin and Marlborough lasted till 1710, and it was one of the most glorious in English history. It was rendered illustrious by the great victories of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, and Saragossa; by the expulsion of the French from Flanders and from Germany; by the brilliant though somewhat barren achievements of Peterborough in Spain; by the capture of Gibraltar by Rooke, and of Minorca by Stanhope; by the defeat of the combined efforts of the French and Spaniards to retake the former; by the successful accomplishment of the union with Scotland; by the complete failure of the French attempt to invade Scotland in 1708. It was, however, chequered by more than one serious calamity. The allies were expelled from Castille, and defeated in the great battle of Almanza. The siege of Toulon was unsuccessful; the English plantations in St. Christopher were ruined; a considerable part of the British navy was destroyed in the great storm of 1703; the great admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel perished ingloriously in a shipwreck off the Scilly Isles

in 1707. In Italy and Spain the fortune of arms violently fluctuated, and the natural consummation of the war was growing more and more evident. The passionate attachment displayed by all the Spaniards except the Catalans for the cause of Philip plainly showed how impossible was the scheme of the allies to place, or at least permanently to maintain, an Austrian prince on the Spanish throne. On the other hand, the dismemberment of the Spanish dominions was already accomplished in Italy, for the French had been driven completely from the territory of Milan, and the Austrians had conquered the whole kingdom of Naples. France, though making heroic efforts against her enemies, was reduced to the lowest depths of exhaustion. The distress of many years of desperate warfare, aggravated by the financial incapacity of Chamillart, and still more by the persecution of the Protestants, which had driven a vast part of her capital and commercial energy to other lands, had at length broken that proud spirit which aimed at nothing short of complete ascendancy in Europe. If England desired no other objects than those which were assigned in the treaty of alliance; if she wished only to secure an adequate barrier for Holland, and 'a reasonable satisfaction' for the Emperor by obtaining for him the Spanish dominions in Italy, there was absolutely no obstacle to the establishment of peace. The Government, however, had gradually undergone a complete change. Unity of action and energy was especially needed for a ministry conducting a great war. Many leading Tories who had been expelled from it were now in opposition, and were suspected of holding communications with those who remained. The Whig party were in the ascendant in the House of Commons after the election of 1705, and in the Cabinet after the appointment of Cowper, and they put a constant pressure upon the Queen and upon the ministry. Under these circumstances, the system of a divided cabinet became completely untenable, though both the Queen and Godolphin clung tenaciously to it, and the remnants of Tory influence were gradually extruded. Sunderland, the son-in-law of Marlborough, and one of the most violent of the Whigs, was introduced into the Cabinet as Secretary of State in 1707. In 1708 Harley, who had for some time been acquiring the foremost place in the confidence of the Queen, was driven from

office. It was known or suspected that he was busily intriguing against his colleagues, and especially against Godolphin, and he desired to strengthen the Tory and Church element in the ministry. The course of events, however, was evidently running counter to his policy; and a recent incident had involved him in much suspicion and obloquy. A clerk in his office, named Gregg, was found to have despatched copies of important state papers to the French. Gregg underwent a searching examination before the Privy Council, and afterwards before a Committee of the House of Lords; pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey, and was sentenced to be hung, but his execution was respited for nearly three months, in hopes of extorting from him a confession implicating Harley. Nothing, however, except great carelessness was proved against the minister, and Gregg before execution solemnly exculpated him from all participation in the crime. Still the circumstance weakened his position. Marlborough and Godolphin insisted on his dismissal, and the Queen having refused, they tendered their resignations. The Queen, who is said to have regarded that of Godolphin with great equanimity, though she felt that the retirement of Marlborough in the midst of the war would have been a national calamity, procrastinated, and showed much disposition to enter into a hopeless struggle, but the prudence of Harley averted it. He retired from office, and was accompanied by St. John, the Secretary of War; by the Attorney-General, Sir Simon Harcourt, who was the most eminent of the Tory lawyers; and by Sir Thomas Mansell, Comptroller of the Household. The position of Attorney-General remained for some time vacant, but the others were filled with Whigs; and it was at this time that Walpole attained the dignity of Secretary of War.

One more step remained to be accomplished. A well-planned Jacobite expedition, intended to raise Scotland, which was then bitterly exasperated by the Union, was despatched from Dunkirk in the March of 1708. 4,000 French troops were on board; and, as Scotland was at this time generally disaffected, and as it was almost denuded of troops, the hopes of the French ministers were very sanguine. The vigilance of the Government, however, discovered the secret; and when the expedition was already in sight of Scotland it was attacked by

an overwhelming fleet under Byng, put to flight, and, with the loss of one ship, driven to France. This expedition aroused a strong resentment in England, which was very favourable to the Whigs; and the energy shown by the Government also tended to strengthen its position. The election of 1708 immediately followed, and it resulted in another large Whig majority. The party was now too strong, not only for the Queen, but also for Godolphin himself, who desired to temporise, and, at least, to exclude the great Whig leaders from power. In a few months the revolution, which had long been in progress, was completed. On the death of the Prince Consort in the October of this year, Lord Pembroke who was both President of the Council and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland was removed to the vacant place at the head of the Admiralty, and the Queen was compelled to admit Somers into the Government as President of the Council; to make Wharton Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, where he distinguished himself by his rapacity and his oppression, and soon after on the resignation of Pembroke to place Orford at the head of the Admiralty. The Church party, being now wholly in opposition, and the Nonconformists wholly on the Ministerial side, a corresponding change was shown in the spirit of legislation. The Occasional Conformity Act now entirely disappeared. The Scotch Union of 1707, which was the most important domestic measure of this period, and which will be more fully considered in another chapter, was carried in a spirit very favourable to the Kirk, and the same spirit was still more strongly shown by a measure carried in 1709 for naturalising all foreign Protestants who settled in England. In the same year the Jacobite cause was seriously injured by an Act extending the English law of treason to Scotland; but the Government at the same time passed an act of grace granting an indemnity for all past treasons, with certain specified exceptions. Marlborough and Godolphin, who had both corresponded with the Pretender, and who must have seen with some apprehension the advent of the most uncompromising Whigs to power, secured themselves, by this measure, against the very possible hostility of their present allies.

In the meantime the Queen was completely alienated from her ministers. Her ideal was a Government in which neither

Whigs nor Tories possessed a complete ascendancy; but above all things, she dreaded and hated a supremacy of the Whigs. She had the strongest conviction that they were the enemies of her prerogative, and still more the enemies of the Church; and a long series of particular incidents had contributed to intensify her feelings.[1] She remembered with indignation the treatment she had received from William in the latter part of his life, and with gratitude the support the Tories had given her in the matter of her settlement. A bill granting her husband the enormous income of 100,000*l.* a year in the event of his surviving her, had been introduced by the Tories in 1702, and had been carried in spite of the protests of some conspicuous Whigs. On the other hand, the Whigs had repeatedly assailed the maladministration of the Prince, and a desire to avert a threatened and most ungenerous attack upon him when he was on his death-bed was the chief motive which at last induced her to admit Somers to the Cabinet.[2] All the great Whig appointments after 1705 were wrung from her almost by force, and caused her the deepest and most heartfelt anguish. The tie of warm personal friendship which had long bound her to the wife of Marlborough was at length cut. The furious, domineering, and insolent temper of the Duchess at last wore out a patience and an affection of no common strength; and Abigail Hill, who as Mrs. Masham played so great a part during the remainder of the reign, rose rapidly into favour. She was lady of the bedchamber, and was cousin to the Duchess of Marlborough, to whom she owed her position at Court; but her influence over the Queen appears to have been due to her

[1] See her remarkable letter (Oct. 24, 1702), in the *Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough*, pp. 138–140. This book contains much curious evidence of the sentiments of the Queen.

[2] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxv. *Parl. Hist.* vi. 602–603, 619–662. According to the Hamilton papers the change was accelerated by a discovery which Wharton had made of some earlier negotiations of Godolphin with the Pretender. See a note in Burnet, ii. 516. It is obvious that the balance of power inclined so much to the Whigs that the speedy admission of their leaders to office was inevitable. The disregard shown for the feelings of the Queen is very striking. Her husband, to whom she was passionately attached, died on Oct. 28, 1708. On Jan. 28, following, both Houses presented an address to her, 'that she would not suffer her just grief so far to prevail, but would have such indulgence to the hearty desires of her subjects as to entertain thoughts of a second marriage.'—*Parl. Hist.* vi. 777.

sweet and compliant temper; and she soon formed a close alliance with Harley, and aided powerfully in the overthrow of the ministry. As early as 1707 the presence of a new Court influence was felt, and the Queen had marked her feelings to her servants by appointing two High Church bishops without even announcing her intention to the Cabinet.

The effect of these events upon the foreign policy of the Government was very pernicious. The question of the Protestant succession, which might have rallied the country around the Whigs, was now in abeyance. The Church party, which in peaceful times was naturally by far the strongest in England, was in violent hostility to the Government, and it became more and more evident that in the moment of crisis, the influence of the Queen would be on the same side. Under these circumstances the Whig leaders perceived clearly that their main party interest was to prevent the termination of the war. As long as it continued, Marlborough, who was now completely identified with them, could scarcely fail to be at the head of affairs, and the brilliancy of his victories had given the party a transient and abnormal popularity. In 1706 Lewis, being thoroughly depressed, opened a negotiation with the Dutch, and offered peace to the allies on terms which would have abundantly fulfilled every legitimate end of the war. The battle of Ramillies had utterly ruined the French cause in the Spanish Netherlands, and had been followed by the loss of Louvain, Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, Menin, and other places. In Spain the victory was for the time no less complete. Philip had been compelled to abandon the siege of Barcelona, and to take refuge in France, and the allies, after a long series of successes, had occupied Madrid, where they proclaimed his rival, king. In Italy, however, Philip was still powerful; his cause had been of late almost uniformly successful, and although, with the victory of Eugene over Marsin before Turin, the tide had begun to turn, yet the kingdom of the Two Sicilies was still in his complete possession. Under these circumstances the French king proposed that Philip should relinquish all claim to the Spanish throne, that he should be compensated out of the Spanish dominions in Italy by a separate kingdom consisting of the Milanese territory, of Naples, and of Sicily,

that the strong places of the Spanish Netherlands should be all ceded as a barrier to Holland, and that important commercial privileges should be granted to the maritime powers. Something might, no doubt, be said about the cession of the Milanese, which would endanger the territory of the Duke of Savoy, but this question of detail could easily have been arranged, for Lewis showed himself quite prepared in the subsequent negotiations to restrict the kingdom he desired for his grandson to Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, with a small part of Tuscany, to Naples and Sicily, or, if absolutely necessary, to Sicily alone. By the proposition of France the union of the crowns of France and Spain would have been effectually prevented. The division of the Spanish dominions would have fully realised the object of the treaties of partition, and the great danger arising to Europe from the weakness of Holland would have been as far as possible removed. The Emperor, however, claimed for the Archduke the whole Spanish succession, and this claim, which, if realised, would have created in Europe a supremacy for the House of Austria, hardly less dangerous than that which Lewis desired for France, was so strenuously supported by the Whig ministers of England that they made the cession of all the Spanish dominions to the Austrian Prince an essential preliminary to the peace. No such condition had been laid down by William in the treaty of alliance, but in 1707 Somers induced both Houses of Parliament to carry resolutions to the effect that no peace could be safe or honourable if Spain, the West Indies, or any part of the Spanish monarchy were suffered to remain under the House of Bourbon. 'I am fully of your opinion,' said the Queen, in replying to the address, 'that no peace can be honourable or safe for us or our allies till the entire monarchy of Spain be restored to the House of Austria.'[1] A year later the House of Lords again pledged itself by an address to the same policy.

The danger and the impolicy of such pledges were very clearly shown by the event. Had the peace been made in 1706 instead of 1713, more than thirty millions of English money as well as innumerable English lives would have been saved, and there can be little doubt that the party interest of the

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 609–610. See too Marlborough's Letters in Coxe, ch. l.

Whig ministers was a main cause of the failure of the negotiation. Still more indefensible was their conduct in 1709. The years that had elapsed since the previous negotiation, though very chequered, had, on the whole, been disastrous to France. The allies had, it is true, been compelled to raise the siege of Toulon, and in the beginning of 1708 the French had retaken some of the towns they had lost in Flanders, but the battle of Oudenarde speedily ruined all their hopes in that quarter, and Mons, Nieuport, and Luxembourg were soon the only towns of the Spanish Netherlands which were not in the hands of the allies. The English had taken Port Mahon and Sardinia; the Duke of Savoy had taken Exilles and Fenestrelles, and a succession of Austrian victories had driven the French out of Lombardy and out of Naples. In Spain, however, a brilliant gleam of success had lit up the fallen fortunes of Lewis. In the great battle of Almanza the allies were utterly defeated by Berwick, and all Spain, except Catalonia, was again under the sceptre of Philip. The position of France itself, however, was most deplorable. Lewis, who in the beginning of the war had given his orders on the banks of the Danube, the Po, and the Tagus, was now reduced to such straits that it was doubtful whether he could long be secure in his capital. To the ruin of the finances, the frightful drain of men, the despondency produced by a long train of crushing calamities in the field, were now added the horrors of famine. A winter of almost unparalleled severity had ruined the olives and a great proportion of the vineyards throughout France; the corn crops were everywhere deficient, and the people were reduced to the most abject wretchedness. Even in Paris, though every effort was made to produce an artificial plenty at the expense of the provinces, it was noticed that in 1709 the death-rate was nearly double the average, while the decrease in the average of births and marriages amounted to one quarter.[1] Under these circumstances Lewis, resolving on peace at any price, submitted to the allies the most humiliating offers ever made by a French king. He consented, after a long

[1] St. Simon's *Memoirs*. Torcy's *Memoirs*. M. Martin in his *Hist. de France* has collected much evidence of the French distress at this period. See too Cooke's *Hist. of Parties*, i. 573.

and painful struggle, to abandon the whole of the Spanish dominions to the Austrian Prince without any compensation whatever, to yield Strasburg, Brisach, and Luxembourg to the Emperor, to yield ten fortresses as a barrier to the Dutch, including Lille and Tournay, which were justly regarded as essential to the security of France, to yield Exilles and Fenestrelles to the Duke of Savoy, to recognise the titles of the Queen of England, of the King of Prussia, and of the Elector of Hanover, to expel the Pretender from his dominions, to destroy the fortifications and harbour of Dunkirk, and to restore Newfoundland to England. All these concessions, together with considerable commercial advantages to the maritime powers, were offered by France without any compensation whatever except the peace, and they were all found to be insufficient. By a provision as impolitic as it was barbarous—for it once more kindled the flagging enthusiasm of the French into a flame—it was insisted, as a preliminary to the peace, that Lewis should join with the allies in expelling, if necessary, by force of arms, his grandson from Spain, that this task must be accomplished within two months, that if it was not accomplished within that time the war should begin anew, but that in the meantime the fortifications of Dunkirk should be demolished, and all the strong places mentioned in the treaty which were still in French hands should be ceded, so that at the expiration of what might be merely a truce of two months, France should be helpless before her enemies.[1]

There are few instances in modern history of a more scandalous abuse of the rights of conquest than this transaction. It may be in part explained by the ambition of the Emperor, who desired a complete ascendancy in Europe; and in part also by the excessive demands and animosity of the Dutch, who remembered the unprovoked invasion of their country in 1670, and the almost insane arrogance with which Louvois had threatened their ambassador with the Bastille. The prolongation of the war, however, would have been impossible but for the policy of the Whig ministers, who supported the most extravagant claims of their allies. Marlborough himself went over to the Hague, and

[1] Torcy's *Memoirs*. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*. Burnet's *Own Times*, Martin *Hist. de France*, tom. xiv.

the French endeavoured to bribe him by graduated offers, ranging from two to four millions of livres, in case he could obtain for Philip a compensation in Italy, and for France Strasburg and Landau and the integrity of Dunkirk, or at least some part of these boons.[1] The offer was unavailing; no one of these several advantages was conceded, and Marlborough steadily opposed the peace. His conduct was very naturally ascribed to his interest as a general and a politician in the continuance of the war, but his private correspondence shows the imputation to be unfounded. It appears from his letters to his wife that he, at this time, earnestly desired repose, that he considered the demands of the allies, in more than one respect, excessive, and that the chief blame of the failure rests upon his colleagues. He took, however, about this time, a step which greatly injured him with the country. It was evident that his position was very precarious. The old affection of the Queen for his wife, which had been the firm basis of his power, was gone. The war, which made him necessary, could hardly be greatly protracted. Godolphin, who of all statesmen was most closely allied with him, was evidently declining. The Tories and Jacobites could never forgive the part which Marlborough had taken in the Revolution, and since the accession of Anne; while, on the other hand, he had tried to secure himself from possible ruin by more than one Jacobite intrigue, and his conversion to Whiggism was too recent and too partial to enable him to win the confidence of the uncompromising Whigs who had now risen to power. It must be added, that he had recently undergone a very serious disappointment. In 1706, when the battle of Ramillies had driven the French out of the Spanish Netherlands, the Emperor, filling up a blank form which had been given him by his brother, conferred upon Marlborough the governorship of that province. It was a post of much dignity and power, and of very great emolument, and Marlborough earnestly desired to accept it. The Queen at this time cordially approved of the appointment; the ministers supported it; and Somers, who was the most important Whig outside the ministry, expressed a strong opinion in its favour.

[1] See the curious letter of Lewis authorising these offers. — Torcy's *Memoirs*.

But in Holland it excited the most violent opposition. The Dutch desired that no step should be taken conferring the province definitely upon the Austrian claimant till the question of the barrier had been settled. They hoped that some of the towns would pass under their undivided dominion, and that the system of government would be such as to give them a complete ascendancy in the rest; and the danger of breaking up the alliance was so great that Marlborough at once gracefully declined the offer. It was renewed by Charles himself in 1708, after the battle of Oudenarde, in terms of the most flattering description, but was again, on public grounds, declined. Under these circumstances, Marlborough considered himself justified, in 1709, in taking the startling step of asking the position of Captain-General for life. It is possible, and by no means improbable, that his motive was mainly to secure himself from disgrace, and to disentangle himself from party politics. In his most confidential letters he frequently speaks of his longing for repose, of his weariness of those personal and political intrigues which had so often paralysed his military enterprise, of his sense of the growing infirmities of age. The position of commander-in-chief for life would at once free him from political apprehensions and embarrassments, and enable him to restrict himself to that department in which he had no rival. But if, on the other hand, his object was ambition, it is plain that the position to which he aspired would give him a power of the most formidable kind. Cautious, reticent, and, at the same time, in the highest degree sagacious and courageous, he had ever shrunk from identifying himself absolutely with either side, and it had been his aim to hold the balance between parties and dynasties, to dictate conditions, to watch opportunities. A general who was the idol of his troops, who possessed to the highest degree every military acquirement, and who, at the same time, held his command independently of the ministers and even of the Crown, might easily, in a divided nation and in the crisis of a disputed succession, determine the whole course of affairs. Had the request been made soon after the battle of Blenheim, it is not impossible that it might have been conceded, but the time for making it had passed. The Chancellor Cowper, on being apprised of it, coldly answered

that it was wholly unprecedented. The Queen, to the great indignation of Marlborough, absolutely refused it; when the transaction was divulged, the nation, which had at least learnt from Cromwell a deep and lasting hatred of military despotism, placed upon it the worst construction, and it contributed much to the unpopularity of the Whigs.

Besides this cause of division and discontent, some murmurs arose at the reckless prolongation of a war which produced much distress among the poor; but on the whole they were not very serious, and the approaching downfall of the ministers was mainly due to the alienation of the Queen and to the opposition of the Church. For some time the controversy about the doctrine of non-resistance had been raging with increased intensity, and there were many evident signs that the Church opposition, which had been thrown into the shade by the glories of Blenheim, was acquiring new strength. A sermon preached by Hoadly against the doctrine of passive obedience, in 1705, was solemnly condemned by the Lower House of Convocation. Blackhall, one of the bishops appointed by Anne without consultation with her ministers, being called upon to preach before the Queen shortly after his consecration, availed himself of the occasion to assert the Tory doctrine of non-resistance in its extreme form; and the sermon, which was in fact a condemnation of the Revolution, was published without any sign of royal disapprobation. The Scotch Union was violently denounced as introducing Presbyterians into Parliament, recognising by a great national act the non-Episcopal Establishment of Scotland, and providing a powerful ally for the enemies of the Church. The Act for naturalising foreign Protestants was even more unpopular. It was certain to swell the ranks of the Nonconformists. It excited all the English animosity against foreigners; and soon after it had passed, more than 6,000 Germans, from the Palatinate, came over in a state of extreme destitution at a time when a period of great distress was already taxing to the utmost the benevolence of the rich. Nearly at the same time too, the Church acquired a considerable accession, not indeed in numbers, but in moral force, by the partial extinction of the non-juror schism. Ken had resigned his pretensions to his bishopric. Lloyd, the deposed bishop of

Norwich, died on January 1, 1709-10, and there remained no other of the prelates who had been deprived by William. One section of the non-jurors, it is true, took measures to perpetuate the division, but Dodwell, Nelson, Brokesby, and some others reverted to the Church.[1] The language of the clergy became continually more aggressive. The pulpits rang with declamations about the danger of the Church, with invectives against Nonconformists, with covert attacks upon the ministers. The train was fully laid; the impeachment of Sacheverell produced the explosion that shattered the Whig ministry of Anne.

The circumstances of that singular outbreak of Church fanaticism are well known. The hero of the drama was fellow of Magdalen College and rector of St. Saviour, Southwark; and, though himself the grandson of a dissenting minister who soon after the Restoration had suffered an imprisonment of three years for officiating in a conventicle,[2] he had been for some time a conspicuous preacher and an occasional writer[3] in the High Church ranks. It was alleged by his opponents, and, after the excitement of the contest had passed, it was hardly denied by his friends, that he was an insolent and hot-headed man, without learning, literary ability, or real piety; distinguished chiefly by his striking person and good delivery, and by his scurrilous abuse of Dissenters and Whigs. Of the two sermons that came under the consideration of Parliament, the first was preached at the Assizes of Derby, and was published with a dedication to the high sheriff and jury, deploring the dangers that menaced the Church and the betrayal of its 'principles, interests, and constitution.' The second and more famous one, 'On the perils from false brethren,' was preached on November 5, 1709, in St. Paul's Cathedral, before the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London, and was dedicated to the former. In this sermon the preacher maintained at great length the doctrine of absolute non-resistance, inveighed against

[1] See Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors* and *Hist. of Convocation.*

[2] Tindal.

[3] He had published *A Fast-day Sermon*, preached at Oxford in 1702, which was one of the works that produced Defoe's *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, an assize sermon at Oxford, preached in 1704, and two pamphlets called *Political Union*, and *The Rights of the Church of England.*

the principle of toleration, described the Church as in a condition of imminent danger, insinuated very intelligibly that the ministers were amongst the false brethren, reflected severely upon Burnet and Hoadly, and glanced at Godolphin himself under the nickname of Volpone.[1] Referring to the vote of Parliament declaring that the Church was in no danger, he rather happily reminded his hearers that a similar vote had been carried, about the person of Charles I., at the very time when his future murderers were conspiring his death. The sermon being delivered on a very conspicuous occasion, and conveying with great violence the sentiments of a large party in the State, had an immense circulation and effect; and Mr. Dolben, the son of the last Archbishop of York, brought both it and the sermon at Derby under the notice of the House of Commons. The House voted both sermons scurrilous and seditious libels, and summoned Sacheverell to the bar. He at once acknowledged the authorship, and stated that the Lord Mayor, who was a Tory member, had encouraged him to publish the sermon at St. Paul's. This assertion would probably have led to the expulsion of the Lord Mayor had he not strenuously contradicted it. The House ultimately resolved to proceed against Sacheverell in the most formal and solemn manner in its power—by an impeachment at the bar of the House of Lords. It was desired to obtain a condemnation of the doctrine of the sermon, invested with every circumstance of dignity that could strike the imagination, and, if possible, prevent a revival of the agitation. The House, at the same time, took great pains that there should be no doubt of the main issue that was raised. The ablest and most conspicuous assailant of the doctrine of passive obedience was Hoadly, who had recently been answering the sermon of Bishop Blackhall on this very question. The House of Commons accordingly, when condemning Sacheverell, passed a resolution warmly eulogising the writings of Hoadly in defence of the Revolution, and petitioning the Queen to bestow upon him some piece of Church preferment. It refused to admit Sacheverell to bail; but this favour was soon afterwards granted him by the House of Lords.

[1] A character in the 'Fox' of Ben Jonson.

The extreme impolicy of the course which was adopted was abundantly shown by the event. Had Sacheverell been merely prosecuted in the ordinary law courts, or had the House by its own authority burnt the sermon and imprisoned the preacher for the remainder of the Session, the matter would probably have excited but little commotion. Somers, and Eyre the Solicitor-General, from the beginning opposed the impeachment, and there is reason to believe that both Marlborough and Walpole joined in the same view. Godolphin, however, actuated, it was said,[1] by personal resentment, urged it on, and it was voted by a large majority, and was at once accepted by the Church as a challenge. The necessary delay was sufficient for the organisation of a tremendous opposition, and an outburst of enthusiasm was manifested such as England had never seen since the day of the acquittal of the bishops. The ablest Tory counsel undertook the defence of Sacheverell. Atterbury, the most brilliant of the High Church controversialists, took a leading part in composing the speech which he delivered. The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was one of his bail. He appeared in court ostentatiously surrounded by several of the chaplains of the Queen. Prayers were offered in all the leading churches, and even in the royal chapel, for 'Dr. Sacheverell under persecution,' and the pulpits all over England were enlisted in his cause. When the Queen went to listen to the proceedings, her sedan chair was surrounded by crowds crying, 'God bless your Majesty! We hope your Majesty is for High Church and Sacheverell.' When Sacheverell himself drove to Westminster Hall, the people thronged in multitudes to kiss his hand, and every head was uncovered as he passed. The meeting-houses of the Dissenters were everywhere wrecked, and that of Burgess, one of their most conspicuous preachers in London, was burnt. The houses of the Lord Chancellor, of Wharton, of Burnet, Hoadly, and Dolben, were threatened. All who were believed to be hostile to Sacheverell, all who refused to join in the cry of 'High Church and Sacheverell,' were insulted in the streets, and the condition of London became so serious that large bodies of troops were called out. The excitement propagated itself to every part of the country and to every class of society, and the

[1] See the *Hist. of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne.*

Church agitations under Anne are among the first political movements in England in which women are recorded to have taken a very active part.[1]

The prosecution, on the other hand, was conducted with much skill. The charges were that Sacheverell had described the necessary means to bring about the Revolution as odious and unjustifiable, had denounced the Toleration Act, and, in defiance of the votes of both Houses of Parliament, had represented the Church as in great danger, and the administration, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, as tending to the destruction of the constitution. Whatever may be thought of the conduct of a party which treated such expressions of opinion as criminal offences, it must be admitted that the speeches of the managers of the impeachment were distinguished both for moderation and ability, and it is remarkable that Burke, long afterwards, when separating from the Whig party at the French Revolution, appealed to them as the ablest and most authentic expression of the Whig policy of the statesmen of 1688.[2] It is impossible, indeed, to read those of Jekyll, Walpole, Lechmere, Parker, Eyre, and the other managers, without being struck with the guarded caution they display in asserting the rights of nations to resist their sovereigns. They carefully restrict it to cases in which the original contract was broken, in which the sovereign has violated the laws, endeavoured to subvert the scheme of government determined on in concert by King, Lords, and Commons. It is on these grounds, and on these alone, that they

[1] See Swift's *Examiner*, No. 31, Defoe has given a characteristic description of the female enthusiasm for Sacheverell. 'Matters of government and affairs of state are become the province of the ladies . . . they have hardly leisure to live, little time to eat and sleep, and none at all to say their prayers . . . Little Miss has Dr. Sacheverell's picture put into her prayer-book, that God and the Doctor may take her up in the morning before breakfast; and all manner of discourse among the women runs now upon war and government . . . This new invasion of the politician's province is an eminent demonstration of the sympathetic influence of the clergy upon the sex and the near affinity between the gown and the petticoat; since all the errors of our present and past administrators, and all breaches made upon our politics could never embark the ladies till you fall upon the clergy. But as soon as you pinch the parson he holds out his hand to the ladies for assistance, and they appear as one woman in his defence.' Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. 124–126. See too the *Spectator*, No. lvii. Clarendon, however, notices a similar outburst of feminine zeal in the semi-religious Politics of the Rebellion.

[2] *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

justify the Revolution. The notion that the son of James II. was a supposititious child, which had borne a greater part in the struggle than Whig writers like to admit, was completely abandoned. The managers rested their case solely on the ground that a sovereign may be legitimately resisted who has infringed the constitutional compact by which he was bound; but at the same time they acknowledge fully that a grave and distinct violation of a fundamental law is necessary as a justification, that obedience is in all normal times a stringent duty, and that the instability of a government exposed without defence in its most essential parts to perpetual revision, at every fluctuation of popular caprice, is wholly foreign to the genius of the English constitution. To state in the fullest and most authentic manner the principles on which the Whig party justified the Revolution was one great object of the impeachment, and that object was fully attained. Another important result was that the Tory defenders of Sacheverell abandoned in the law courts the obvious meaning of the teaching of the pulpit, and, aiming chiefly at acquittal, met the charges rather by evasion than by direct defence. The right of nations in extreme cases to resist their sovereign was the main question discussed, and the language of the pulpit on the subject had been perfectly unequivocal. The clergy had long taught that royalty was so eminently a divine institution that no injustice, no tyranny, no persecution could justify resistance. Sacheverell, it is true, in his speech during the trial, reaffirmed this doctrine without qualification, and numerous passages were cited from the homilies and from the works of Anglican divines, supporting it; but his counsel, on the other hand, admitted the right of resistance in extreme cases. They contended that a preacher was justified in laying down broad moral precepts, without pausing to enumerate all possible exceptions to their application; and one of the ablest of them maintained, in direct opposition to the spirit of Tory theology, that the supreme power in England was not in the sovereign, but in the legislature.[1] In the same spirit they urged that the term 'Toleration Act' was a popular expression unknown to the law, that the proper designation of the law referred to was the 'Act

[1] See Sir Simon Harcourt's Speech for Sacheverell.

of Indulgence;' and that when Sacheverell denounced 'toleration' he alluded only to the insufficient prosecution of sceptical or blasphemous books. Many passages from such books were cited, and Sacheverell himself scandalised a large part of his audience by calling God to witness, in opposition to the plain, direct, and unquestionable meaning of his sermon, that 'he had neither suggested, nor did in his conscience believe, that the Church was in the least peril from Her Majesty's administration.' Such an assertion could have no effect, except to shake the credit of him who made it; and the House of Lords voted him guilty, by sixty-nine to fifty-two.

Here, however, ended the triumph of the Whigs. The popular feeling in favour of Sacheverell throughout England had risen almost to the point of revolution. The immense majority of the clergy were ardently on his side. The sympathies of the Queen were in the same direction. In the excited condition of the public mind, any act of severity might lead to the most dangerous consequences, and the House did not venture to impose more than a nominal penalty. The Dukes of Argyle and Somerset, who had for some time been wavering in their allegiance, took this occasion of abandoning the ministry, and several other Whig peers accompanied them.[1] Sacheverell was merely suspended from preaching for three years, and his sermons, together with the Oxford decree of 1683, were burnt. A resolution, that during the three years of his suspension he should be ineligible for promotion, was rejected by a majority of one. The House of Commons at the same time ordered the collection of sceptical passages which had been made for the defence to be burnt, as well as two books, 'On the Rights of the Christian Church' and a treatise 'On the Word Person,' of which the friends of Sacheverell had complained.

The sentence was very naturally regarded as a triumph for the accused, and it was followed by a long and fierce burst of popular enthusiasm. In London and almost every provincial town the streets were illuminated, and the blaze of bonfires attested the exultation of the people. Addresses to the Queen poured in from every part of the country, sometimes asserting in abject form the doctrine of passive obe-

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxxvii.

dience, censuring the conduct of her ministers, and in many cases imploring her to dissolve a Parliament which no longer represented the sentiments of her people.[1] Sacheverell, within a few months of his trial, obtained a living in Shropshire, and his journey to take possession of it was almost like a royal progress. At Oxford, where he continued for some time, he was magnificently entertained by the Earl of Abingdon, by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and by the heads of the colleges. At Banbury the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen came, in full robes and with the mace before them, to bring him a present of wine, and to congratulate him on his deliverance. At Warwick, at Wrexham, at Shrewsbury, at Bridgenorth, at Ludlow, hundreds of the inhabitants, on horseback, escorted him into the town, while the church bells rang in his honour, and the steeples were draped with flags, and the streets hung with flowers. Drums beat and trumpets sounded at his approach, and wherever he appeared, his steps were thronged by admirers, wearing the oak-leaf so popular since the Restoration. He was forbidden to preach, but the churches could not contain the multitudes who pressed to hear him read the prayers, and crowds of infants were borne to the fonts where he presided. The Dissenters all over England were fiercely assailed. At Bristol one of their places of worship was pulled down, and the materials were flung into the river. At Exeter, Cirencester, Oxford, Gloucester, and many other places their meeting-houses and habitations were attacked, and the Low Churchmen were regarded with scarcely less virulence. One clergyman—the rector of the important and populous parish of Whitechapel—signalised himself by exhibiting, as an altar-piece in his church, a picture of the Last Supper, in which Judas was represented attired in a gown and band, with a black patch upon his forehead, and seated in an elbow-chair. The figure is said to have been at first intended for Burnet, but the painter, fearing prosecution, ultimately fixed upon Dean Kennet, a somewhat less powerful opponent of Sacheverell.[2]

[1] A collection of these addresses has been published in a single volume (1710).

[2] *Kennet's Life*, p. 140–142. Kennet wore a patch on account of a gun-shot received in early youth. This book gives a curious picture of the animosity against the Low

The policy of the Queen during this outbreak was marked by much cautious skill. However strong may have been her private sympathies, she appears during the trial to have acted in accordance with the wishes of her ministers. The chaplain who prayed for Sacheverell in her chapel was dismissed. Chief Justice Holt having died during the trial, Parker, one of the most eloquent managers of the impeachment, was promoted to his place, and a fortnight after the verdict the Queen prorogued Parliament with a speech, deploring that some had insinuated that the Church was in danger under her administration, and expressing her wish 'that men would study to be quiet, and to do their own business, rather than busy themselves in reviving questions and disputes of a very high nature.' She soon, however, perceived that the country was with the Tories, and manifested her own inclination without restraint. Among the minor incidents of the impeachment one of the most remarkable had been the reappearance in public life of the Duke of Shrewsbury. He had been conspicuous among the great Whig nobles who invited William to England, but after a brief, troubled, and vacillating career, had abandoned politics, and retired, embittered and disappointed, to Italy. 'I wonder,' he wrote with great bitterness to Somers in 1700, 'how any man who has bread in England will be concerned in business of State. Had I a son, I would sooner bind him a cobbler than a courtier, and a hangman than a statesman.' After a long period of occultation, however, he again took his place in that assembly of which he had once been the brightest ornament, and when the Sacheverell case arose he gave the weight of a name and influence that were still very great to the Tory side, and was one of those who voted for the acquittal. About a week after the prorogation, the Queen, without even apprising her ministers till the last moment of her intention, dismissed Lord Kent, the Lord Chamberlain, and gave the staff to Shrewsbury. The ministry should, undoubtedly, have resigned, but, partly through the constitutional indecision of Godolphin, and partly perhaps in order to avoid a dissolution of Parliament

Churchmen during the Sacheverell episode. See too Wright's *House of Hanover*, Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, and the Histories of Burnet, Boyer, Somerville, and Tindal.

at a time when the current flowed strongly against their party, they remained to drink the cup of humiliation to the dregs. Godolphin, it is true, wrote a very singular letter of frank and even angry remonstrance to the Queen.[1] 'Your Majesty,' he said, 'is suffering yourself to be guided to your own ruin and destruction as fast as it is possible for them to compass it to whom you seem so much to hearken;' and he proceeded to expatiate upon the new appointment, in terms which few ministers would have employed towards their sovereign. But this letter had no result. In the following month Marlborough was compelled to bestow the command of two regiments upon Colonel Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham, who had displaced his wife in the favour of the Queen. In June, Sunderland, the Secretary of State and son-in-law of Marlborough, was summarily dismissed, and the seals were bestowed upon Lord Dartmouth, one of the most violent of Tories. In August a still bolder step was taken. Godolphin himself was dismissed. The treasury was placed in commission, Harley being one of the commissioners, and that statesman became at the same time Chancellor of the Exchequer and virtually Prime Minister. In September, the remaining ministers were dismissed. Parliament was dissolved. An election took place, which was one of the most turbulent ever known in England, and the defeat of the Whigs was so crushing that the ascendancy of their opponents during the remaining years of the reign was undisputed.

The immense power displayed by the Church in this struggle was not soon forgotten by statesmen. The utter ruin of a ministry supported by all the military achievements of Marlborough and by all the financial skill of Godolphin was beyond question mainly due to the exertions of the clergy. It furnished a striking proof that when fairly roused no other body in the country could command so large an amount of political enthusiasm, and it was also true that except under very peculiar and abnormal circumstances no other body had so firm and steady a hold on the affections of the people. The fact is the more remarkable when we consider the very singular intellectual and political activity of the time. If we measure the age of Anne by its highest intellectual achievements, a period

[1] See this curious letter in Boyer, pp. 470-471.

that was adorned among other names by those of Newton, Pope, Swift, Addison, Steele, Defoe, Bolingbroke, and Prior, can hardly find a rival in English history between the age of Shakespeare and Bacon and the age of Byron and Scott. If we measure it less by its highest achievements than by its efforts to enlarge the circle of intellectual interests it will appear scarcely less eminent. It was in the reign of Anne that Defoe created the realistic novel, that Steele originated, and Addison brought to perfection, the periodical essay which for about three-quarters of a century was the most popular form of English literature, that the first daily newspaper was published in England, that the first English law was enacted for the protection of literary property. A passion for physical science had spread widely through the nation. Except in the University of Leyden, where it was taught by an eminent professor named 's Gravesande, the great discovery of Newton had scarcely found an adherent on the Continent till it was popularised by Voltaire in 1728, but in England it had already acquired an ascendancy. Bentley, Whiston, and Clarke enthusiastically adopted it. Gregory and Keill made it popular at Oxford, and Desaguliers, who gave lectures in London in 1713, says that he found the Newtonian philosophy generally received among persons of all ranks and professions, and even among the ladies, by the help of experiments.[1] Never before had so large an amount of literary ability been enlisted in politics. Swift, Bolingbroke, Atterbury, Arbuthnot, and Prior were prominent among the Tories; Addison, Steele, and Defoe among the Whigs. Side by side with the 'Tatler,' the 'Spectator,' the 'Guardian,' and the 'Englishman,' in which the political was in a great degree subordinate to the literary element, there arose a multitude of purely political newspapers and periodicals. The 'Observator' of Tutchin, the 'Review' of Defoe, the 'Rehearsal' of Leslie, the 'Examiner' of Swift, 'Fog's Journal,' 'Dyer's News Letter,' the 'Medley,' the 'Mercurius Rusticus,' the 'Postman,' the 'Flying Post,' the 'English Post,' the 'Athenian Mercury,' and many others contributed largely to the formation of public opinion. The licentiousness of the press was made a matter of formal complaint in an address by the Lower House

[1] See Whewell's *Hist. of Inductive Philosophy*, ii. 145–155.

of Convocation in 1703, and in a Queen's Speech in 1714, and the Tory Ministry endeavoured to repress it by the Stamp Act of 1712, and by a long series of prosecutions. 'There is scarcely any man in England,' said a great Whig writer a few years later, 'of what denomination soever that is not a free thinker in politics, and hath not some particular notions of his own by which he distinguishes himself from the rest of the community. Our island, which was formerly called a nation of saints, may now be called a nation of statesmen.'[1] The extraordinary multiplication of pamphlets published at a very low price, and industriously dispersed in the streets, was especially noticed,[2] and political writings which happened to strike the popular taste acquired in the beginning of the eighteenth century a circulation perhaps greater in proportion to the population than any even of our own time. The 'True-born Englishman' of Defoe, which was published in 1700-1 in order to check the clamour against William as a foreigner, went through nine editions on good paper in about four years, was printed in the same period twelve times without the concurrence of the author, and no less than 80,000 copies of the cheap editions are said to have been disposed of in the streets of London.[3] About 40,000 copies of the famous sermon of Sacheverell were sold in a few days.[4] More than 60,000 copies of a now forgotten Whig pamphlet, by an author named Benson, published in answer to the Tory addresses to the Queen after the impeachment of Sacheverell, are said to have been sold in London.[5] Bisset's 'Modern Fanatic,' a scurrilous pamphlet against Sacheverell, ran through at least twelve editions. Of Swift's 'Conduct of the Allies,' which was written to prepare the country for the Peace of Utrecht, 11,000 copies were sold in a single month.[6] The 'Spectator,' as Fleetwood assures us,

[1] *Freeholder*, No. 53.

[2] See Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 29. Leibnitz, a few years before, wrote, 'Les feuilles volantes ont plus d'efficace en Angleterre qu'en tout autre pays.' — *Correspondance avec L'Electrice Sophie*, tom. ii. p. 224.

[3] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 346.

[4] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 538.

[5] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. p. 129. The pamphlet was entitled, *A Letter to Sir Joseph Banks, by birth a Swede, but naturalised and a Member of the present Parliament, concerning the late Minehead doctrine which was established by a certain free Parliament of Sweden, to the utter enslaving of that country.*

[6] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. p. 300.

attained at last a daily circulation of 14,000. The unprecedented multiplication of political clubs, which forms one of the most remarkable social features of the period, attests no less clearly the almost feverish activity of political life. Never was there a period less characterised by that intellectual torpor which we are accustomed to associate with ecclesiastical domination, yet in very few periods of English history did the English Church manifest so great a power as in the reign of Anne.

Another consideration which adds largely to the impressiveness of this fact is the nature of the doctrine that was mainly at issue. Whatever may be thought of its truth, the opinion that it is unlawful for subjects to resist their sovereign under any circumstances of tyranny and misgovernment does not appear to be well fitted to excite popular enthusiasm. This, however, was the doctrine which, during the whole of the Sacheverell agitation, was placed in the fore-front of the battle both by the Whigs who assailed and by the Tories who maintained it. It is obvious that in its plain meaning it amounted to a condemnation of the Revolution, and it is equally manifest that those who conscientiously held it would eventually gravitate rather to the House of Stuart than to the House of Brunswick. The position of the clergy during the whole of the preceding reign had been a very false one. A small minority had consistently refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new sovereign. A minority, which was probably still smaller, consistently maintained the Whig theory of government. The immense majority, however, held the doctrines of the indefeasible title of hereditary royalty, and of the sinfulness of all resistance to oppression, and they only took the oaths to the Revolutionary Government with much equivocation, and after long and painful misgiving. Much was said about the supposed vacancy of the throne by the abdication of James. Much was said about the suspicions attaching to the birth of the Prince of Wales, though in a few years these appear to have gradually disappeared. Burnet in 1689 had written a pastoral letter, in which he spoke of William as having a legitimate title to the throne of James 'in right of conquest over him,' and although the House of Commons, resenting the expression, had ordered the letter to be burnt, the theory it advocated was probably

adopted by many.[1] Among the clergy, however, who subscribed the oath of allegiance, the usual refuge lay in the distinction between the king *de jure* and the king *de facto*. Sherlock and many other divines, who asserted the doctrine of passive obedience, contended that it should be paid to the king who was actually in power. They were not called upon to defend the Revolution. They were quite ready to admit that it was a crime, and that all concerned in it had endangered their salvation, but, as a matter of fact, William was upon the throne, and rebellion being in all cases a sin, they were bound to obey him. As long, therefore, as they were not expected to pronounce any judgment upon his title, they could conscientiously take the oath of allegiance. They believed it to be a sin to resist the actual sovereign, and they could therefore freely swear to obey him. The statesmen of the Revolution at first very judiciously met the scruples of the clergy by omitting from the new oath of allegiance the words 'rightful and lawful king,'[2] which had formed part of the former oath, but in the last year of William this refuge was cut off. On the death of James, and on the recognition of the Pretender by Lewis, the Parliament, aiming expressly at this clerical distinction,[3] imposed upon all ecclesiastical persons, as well as upon all other officials, the oath of abjuration, which required them to assert that the pretended Prince of Wales had no right whatever to the crown, and to swear allegiance to the existing sovereign as 'rightful' and 'lawful.'

This harsh and impolitic measure was only carried after a violent struggle, and it was very naturally expected that it would produce a great schism in the Church. The new oath involved a distinct judgment on the Revolution, and it is not easy to see how anyone who held the doctrine of the divine right of kings as it was commonly taught in the English Church from the time of the Restoration, could possibly take it.[4] The resources of

[1] See Somers' *Tracts*, xii. 242.

[2] Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors*, p. 52-54. A writer in 1696 said with much truth, 'The Shibboleth of the Church now is King William's *de facto* title, and no conformity to homilies and rubricks will make you owned by the present Church if you should acknowledge the King to be otherwise so than *de facto*.'—*An Account of the Growth of Deism in England*, p. 10.

[3] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 297.

[4] Burnet gives us a summary of the methods that were resorted to. 'Though in the oath they declared that the pretended Prince of Wales had not any right whatsoever to the

casuistry, however, have never been a monopoly of the disciples of Loyola; and State Churches, though they have many merits, are not the schools of heroism. At the time of the Reformation the great body of the English clergy, rather than give up their preferments, oscillated to and fro between Protestantism and Catholicism at the command of successive sovereigns, and their conduct in 1702 was very similar. With scarcely an exception they bowed silently before the law, and consented to take an oath which to every unsophisticated mind was an abnegation of the most cherished article of their teaching. At the time when the Act came into force Anne had just mounted the throne, and the hopes which the clergy conceived from her known affection for the Church made them peculiarly anxious to remain attached to the Government. The abjuration oath contributed to perpetuate the non-juror schism by repelling those who would otherwise have returned to the Church at the death of James. It lowered the morality of the country by impairing very materially the sanctity of oaths, but it neither paralysed the energies nor changed the teaching of the Tory clergy. At no period since the Restoration did they preach the doctrine of the divine right of kings and the duty of passive obedience more strenuously than in the reign of Anne, and at very few periods did they exercise a greater influence on the English people.

One of the most characteristic features of this teaching was the language that was adopted about Charles I. The memory of that sovereign had long since been transfigured in the Tory legend, and immediately after his execution it became the custom of the Episcopal clergy to draw elaborate parallels between his sufferings and those of Christ. The service in the Prayer-book commemorating the event, by appointing the narrative of the sufferings of Christ to be read from the Gospel, suggested the parallel, which was also faintly intimated by

crown, yet in a paper (which I saw) that went about among them, it was said that *right* was a term of law which had only relation to *legal rights*, but not to a *Divine right* or to *birth-rights*; so, since that right was condemned by law, they by abjuring it did not renounce the *Divine right* that he had by his birth. They also supposed that this abjuration would only bind during the present state of things, but not in case of another revolution or conquest.' Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. p. 314. See too a curious letter in Byrom's *Remains*, vol. i. part i. pp. 30-31.

Clarendon, and developed in some of the Royalist poems and sermons with an astonishing audacity.[1] Foremost in this branch of literature was a very curious sermon preached before Charles II. at Breda in 1649.[2] The preacher declared that 'amongst all the martyrs that followed Christ into heaven bearing his cross never was there any one who expressed so great conformity with our Saviour in his sufferings' as King Charles. He observed that the parallel was so exact that it extended to the minutest particulars, even to the hour of execution, for both sufferers died at three in the afternoon. 'When Christ was apprehended,' he continued, 'he wrought a miraculous cure for an enemy, healing Malchus' ear after it was cut off; so it is well known that God enabled our sovereign to work many wonderful cures even for his enemies. . . . . When our Saviour suffered, there were terrible signs and wonders, for there was darkness over all the land; so during the time of our sovereign's trial there were strange signs seen in the sky in divers places of the kingdom. When our Saviour suffered, the centurion, beholding his passion, was convinced that he was the Son of God, and feared greatly. So one of the centurions who guarded our sovereign . . . . . was convinced and is to this day stricken with great fear, horror, and astonishment. When they had crucified our Saviour, they parted his garments amongst them, and for his coat (because being without seam it could not easily be divided) they did cast lots; even so, having crucified our sovereign, they have parted his garments amongst them, his houses and furniture, his parks and revenues, his three kingdoms, and for Ireland, because it will not be easily gained, they have cast lots who should go thither to conquer it, and, so, take it to themselves; in all these things our sovereign was the living image of our Saviour.' In the reign of Anne language of this kind again became common, and in 1702 a noted clergyman, named Binckes, in a sermon before the Lower House of Con-

[1] See two curious collections called *Monumentum Regale; or, Select Epitaphs and Poems on Charles I.* (1649), and *Vaticinium Votivum, with Elegies on Charles I., Lord Capel, and Lord Villiers* (*1st year of Charles I.'s Martyrdom*). I subjoin one specimen:

Kings are gods once removed. It hence appears
No court but Heaven's can trie them by their peers,
So that for Charles the Good to have been tryed
And cast by mortal votes was Deicide.

[2] It was reprinted in the defence of the sermon of Dr. Binckes in 1702.

vocation, not only intimated that the plague and the fire of London were due to the death of Charles, but even proceeded to argue that his execution transcended in enormity the murder of Christ. 'If, with respect to the dignity of the person, to have been born King of the Jews was what ought to have screened our Saviour from violence; here is also one not only born to a crown but actually possessed of it. He was not only called king by some and at the same time derided by others for being so called, but he was acknowledged by all to be a king. He was not just dressed up for an hour or two in purple robes, and saluted with a "Hail, King!" but the usual ornaments of royalty were his customary apparel. . . . Our Saviour declaring that "His kingdom was not of this world" might look like a sort of renunciation of his temporal sovereignty, for the present desiring only to reign in the hearts of men, but here was nothing of this in the case before us. Here was an indisputable, unrenounced right of sovereignty, both by the laws of God and man. . . . Christ was pleased to set himself out of the reach of the usual temptations incident to royal greatness, and chose a condition which in all respects seemed to be the reverse to majesty, as if it had been with design to avoid the snares which accompany it, notwithstanding that he knew himself otherwise sufficiently secure, having neither been conceived in sin, nor in any way subject to the laws of it. Though the prince whom God was pleased to set over us was no way excepted from human frailty, had no other guard against sin when surrounded with temptations, but only a true sense of religion and the usual assistance of God's grace . . . . yet his greatest enemies . . . . could never charge him with the least degree of vice. . . . When Pilate asked the Jews, "Shall I crucify your king?" they thought themselves obliged to express their utmost resentment against anyone that should pretend to be their king in opposition to Cæsar. This they did upon a principle of loyalty, and out of a misguided zeal, and some stories they had got of a design he had to destroy their temple, to set himself up, and pull down the Church; but in the case before us he against whom our people so clamorously called for justice was one whose greatest crime was his being a king and a friend to the Church.' This sermon was censured by the House of Lords as 'containing

several expressions which gave just scandal and offence to all Christian people,'[1] but the author was soon after appointed Dean of Lichfield, and was twice elected by the clergy Prolocutor of Convocation. The publication of Clarendon's history in 1702 and the two following years probably contributed something to the enthusiasm for Charles. A writer during the Sacheverell agitation, speaking of the doctrine of passive obedience, said, 'I may be positive, at Westminster Abbey where I heard one sermon of repentance, faith, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, I heard three of the other, and it is hard to say whether Jesus Christ or King Charles were oftenest mentioned and magnified.'[2] The University of Oxford caused two similar pictures to be painted, the one representing the death of Christ, and the other the death of Charles. An account of the sufferings of each was placed below; and they were hung in corresponding places in the Bodleian library.[3] The poet Young, in a dedication to Queen Anne, described her grandsire as standing at the last judgment among 'the spotless saints and laurelled martyrs,' while the Almighty Judge, bending from the throne, examined the scars on the neck of Charles, and then looked at his own wounds.[4]

Another and still more curious feature of the Church enthusiasm under Queen Anne was the revival of the old belief that the sovereign was endowed with the miraculous power of curing the struma, or scrofulous tumours, by his touch. This singular superstition had existed from a very early time, both in England and in France. The English kings were supposed to have inherited the power from Edward the Confessor; the French, according to some writers, from St. Lewis, according to others, from Clovis.[5] The miracle was performed with every

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, vi. 23–24. Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 316.

[2] Bisset's *Modern Fanatick* (12th ed.) p. 57.

[3] G. Agar Ellis's *Inquiries respecting Clarendon* (1827), p. 177.

[4] 'His lifted hands his lofty neck surround,
To hide the scarlet of a circling wound.'
Th' Almighty Judge bends forward from His throne
Those scars to mark, and then regards His own.
Dedication to Queen Anne prefixed to Young's Poem on the Last Day.

Young had the grace to suppress this dedication in later editions of the poem.

[5] There was, however, some controversy on the subject, and a good deal of national jealousy was shown. Tooker thinks that the gift was originally the sole prerogative of the English kings, that they derived it from Lucius, who was converted before Clovis, and that the French kings derived it from alliance of

circumstance of publicity, under the inspection of the royal surgeons, and in the presence of the King's chaplains, and the tenacity with which it survived so many changes of civilisation and of religion, is one of the most curious facts in ecclesiastical history. In France it was an old custom for the King, immediately after his consecration, to go in pilgrimage to the monastery of St. Marcoul, in Champagne, where, after a period of preparatory devotion, he performed the cure. The patients were first visited by the chief physician of the King. They were then ranged in the church, or, if they were too numerous, in the adjoining cloisters and park. The King went among them, accompanied by his grand almoner, the captain of his guards, and his chief physician, and he made the sign of the cross on the face of each, pronouncing the words 'Dieu te guerisse, le Roy te touche.' It was pretended that the cures were more numerous in France under the third race of kings than under the two preceding ones, and it is recorded that Lewis XIV., three days after his consecration, in 1654, touched more than 2,500 sick persons in the church of St. Remy, at Rheims.[1] In England a special Latin service was drawn up for the occasion under Henry VII., and it appears to have continued, with the omission of some Popish phraseology, till the end of the reign of Elizabeth.[2] The Reformation in no degree weakened the belief. A Doctor of Divinity, named William Tooker, in the reign of Elizabeth, wrote a work describing the cures he had himself witnessed, and he relates among other cases that of a Popish recusant who was converted to Protestantism, when he found by experience that the excommunicated Queen had cured his scrofula by her touch. The Catholics were much perplexed by the miracle, and were inclined to argue that it was performed by virtue of the sign of the cross which was

blood with the English. *Charisma seu Donum Sanationis* (1597). Laurentius, a physician of Henry IV. of France, wrote a book *De Mirabili Strumarum Curatione*, in which he appropriates the power solely to the French kings. Usually the English writers admitted that the French kings derived the power from St. Lewis, and contented themselves with asserting the superior antiquity of the British prerogative derived from Edward the Confessor. See Collier's *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, Bk. iii. ch. 2. Fuller's *Church Hist.*, Bk. ii.

[1] Menin, *Histoire du Sacre et Couronnement des Rois de France* (1723), pp. 307–314. St. Marcoul is said during his life to have cured many scrofulous persons.

[2] See Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, p. 435.

employed, but in the following reign this sign was omitted from the ceremony without in any degree impairing its efficacy. Under Charles I. the service was drawn up in English, and in the conflict between the royal and republican parties the miracle assumed a considerable prominence. One cure worked by this sovereign was especially famous. As he was being brought by his enemies through Winchester, on his way to the Isle of Wight, an innkeeper of Winchester, who was grievously ill and in daily fear of suffocation, and who had vainly sought help from the doctors, flung himself in the way of the royal prisoner. He was driven back by the guards and not suffered to touch the King, but he threw himself on his knees upon the ground, imploring help, and crying 'God save the king!' The King, struck by the spectacle of so much loyalty, said 'Friend, I see thou art not permitted to come near me, and I cannot tell what thou wouldst have, but God bless thee and grant thy desire.' The prayer was heard; the illness vanished, and, strange to relate, the blotches and tumours which disappeared from the body of the patient appeared in the bottle from which he had before taken his unavailing medicine, and it began to swell both within and without. The story is related by Dr. John Nicholas, warden of Winchester College, who declares it 'within his own knowledge to be every word of it essentially true.'[1] After the death of the King it was found that handkerchiefs dipped in his blood possessed the same efficacy as the living touch. Richard Wiseman, 'sergeant chirurgeon of Charles II.,' published, in 1676, a very curious work called 'Chirurgical Treatises,' in which he entered largely into the treatment of the king's evil, and declared that many hundreds had derived benefit from the blood of Charles.[2] A case was related of a girl of fourteen or fifteen, at Deptford, who had become quite blind through the king's evil. She had sought in vain for help from the surgeons, till at last her eyes were touched with a handkerchief stained with the royal blood, and she at once regained her sight. Hundreds of persons, it was said, came daily to see her from London and other places.[3] Charles II. retained the

[1] Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, pp. 132–137.

[2] P. 247. See too Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, p. 109.

[3] This case is related in a tract in the British Museum, called, *A Miracle*

power in exile, as Francis had done when a prisoner at Madrid, and he touched for the scrofula in Holland, Flanders, and even France.[1] In the great outburst of enthusiastic loyalty that followed the Restoration the superstition attained its climax, and it may be seriously questioned whether in the whole compass of history there is any individual to whom a greater number of miracles has been ascribed than to the most worthless and immoral of English kings. Wiseman assures us that he had been 'a frequent eye-witness of cures performed by his Majesty's touch alone, without any assistance from chirurgery, and these many of them such as had tired out all the endeavours of all chirurgeons before they came thither.' One of his surgeons, named John Browne, whose official duty it was, during many years, to inspect the sick and to witness and verify the cures, has written a book on the subject, which is among the most curious in the literature of superstition, and which contains a history of the cures, a description of numerous remarkable cases which came before the author, and a full calendar, year by year, of the sick who were touched. It appears that in a single year Charles performed the ceremony 8,500 times, and that in the course of his reign he touched nearly 100,000 persons. Before the sick were admitted into the presence of the King it was necessary that they should obtain medical certificates attesting the reality of the disease, and in 1684 the throng of sufferers demanding these was so great that six or seven persons were pressed to death before the surgeon's door.[2] Some points, however, connected with the miracle were much disputed. It was a matter of controversy whether, as was popularly believed, the touch had a greater efficacy on Good Friday than on any other day; whether, as Sir Kenelm Digby maintained, the cure was so dependent upon the gold medal which the King hung around the neck of the patient that if this were lost the malady returned; whether the King obtained the power directly from God or through the medium of the oil of consecration. The Catholicism of James did not impair his power, and he

of Miracles wrought by the Blood of Charles I. upon a Mayd at Detford, four miles from London (1649).

[1] Wiseman's *Chirurgical Treatises*, p. 245. Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, pp. 63–64.

[2] Evelyn's *Diary*, March 28, 1684. See too Evelyn's description of the ceremony, July, 1660.

exercised it to the very eve of the Revolution. A petition has been preserved in the records of the town of Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, asking the Assembly of that province, in 1687, to grant assistance to one of the inhabitants who desired to make the long journey to England in order to obtain the benefit of the royal touch.[1] In that same year, in the centre of the learned society of Oxford the King touched seven or eight hundred sick on a single Sunday.[2] In the preceding year, in the midst of what is termed the Augustan age of French literature, the traveller Gemelli saw Lewis XIV. touch, on Easter Sunday, about 1,600 at Versailles.[3]

The political importance of this superstition is very manifest. Educated laymen might deride it, but in the eyes of the English poor it was a visible, palpable attestation of the indefeasible sanctity of the royal line. It placed the sovereignty entirely apart from the category of mere human institutions, and proved that it possessed a virtue and a glory which the other political forces of the nation could neither create, nor rival, nor destroy. It proved that no personal immorality, no misgovernment, no religious apostacy, no deprivation of political power, could annul the consecration which the Divine hand had imparted to the legitimate heir of the British throne. The Revolution in England at once suspended the miracle, for William, being a stranger, was not generally believed to possess the power, though Whiston relates that on one solitary occasion the King was prevailed upon to touch a sick person, 'praying God to heal the patient, and grant him more wisdom at the same time,' and that the touch, in spite of the manifest incredulity of the Sovereign, proved efficacious.[4] In the person of Anne, however, the old dynasty was again upon the throne, and in the ecclesiastical and political reaction of her reign the royal miracle speedily revived. The service, which was before printed separately, was now inserted in the Prayer-book. The Privy Council issued proclamations stating when the Queen would perform the miracle. The announcement was read in all the parish churches. Dr.

[1] Graham's *Hist. of the United States*, i. 419.
[2] *Life of Anthony Wood.*
[3] Churchill's *Collection of Voyages*, iv. p. 630.
[4] Whiston's *Memoirs* (Ed. 1753), i. p. 377. Whiston ascribed the cures to the prayers of the priests.

Dicken, the Sergeant Surgeon to the Queen who examined the patients, attested in the strongest terms the reality of many of the cures.[1] Swift mentions, in his 'Journal to Stella,' making an application through the Duchess of Ormond, in 1711, in favour of a sick boy. In a single day, in 1712, 200 persons were touched, and among the scrofulous children who underwent the operation was Samuel Johnson.[2] The Nonjurors were especially zealous in urging the miracle as a proof of the necessity of adhering to the ancient line, and it is indeed remarkable how many eminent authorities, in different periods, may be cited in favour of the belief. It found its way into the greatest of the plays of Shakespeare,[3] and Fuller, Heylin, Collier, and Carte among historians, as well as Sancroft, Whiston, Hickes, and Bull among divines, have expressed their firm belief in the miracle. Nothing can be more emphatic than the language of some of them. 'This noisome disease,' says Fuller, speaking of the king's evil, 'is happily healed by the hands of the Kings of England stroking the sore, and if any doubt of the truth thereof, they may be remitted to their own eyes for further confirmation.'[4] 'To dispute the matter of fact,' said Collier, 'is to go to the excesses of scepticism, to deny our senses, and to be incredulous even to ridiculousness.'[5] 'That divers persons desperately labouring under the king's evil,' said Bull, 'have been cured by the mere touch of the royal hands, assisted with the prayers of the priests of our Church attending, is unquestionable, unless the faith of all our ancient writers, and the consentient report of hundreds of most credible persons in our own ages, attesting the same, is to be questioned.'[6] We may observe, however, that even Tooker and Browne acknowledged that there were some who questioned the miracle, and it was admitted that the sick were not always cured and that the cures were not always lasting. The force of imagination to which the ceremony powerfully appealed doubtless effected much. Many impostors came for the purpose of obtaining the gold medal which was bestowed on the occasion in England, or the alms which

[1] Douglas' *Criterion* (Ed. 1807), pp. 203–205.

[2] Boswell's *Johnson* (Croker's ed.) p. 7.

[3] *Macbeth*, Act iv. Scene 3.

[4] Fuller's *Church Hist.*, Bk. ii.

[5] Collier's *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, Bk. iii. ch. 2.

[6] *Sermon on St. Paul's Thorn in the Flesh.*

were distributed in France, and the great political utility of the belief, as well as simple sycophancy, combined with honest credulity to sustain the delusion.[1]

What has been said will be sufficient to show the extent and the nature of the political influence the Anglican clergy at this time exercised in England. It will show that their theory of the nature of royalty was radically different from that of a constitutional government; that, but for the happy fact of the Catholicism of James II. and of his son, the whole stress of their influence would have been thrown into the scale of arbitrary government; and that, in spite of that Catholicism, they were accustomed to preach doctrines from the pulpit which could have no other legitimate or logical conclusion than the restoration of the Stuarts. They were, it is true, sincerely devoted to the reigning sovereign. It is true also that they looked forward with real alarm to a Catholic king, that they sometimes at least professed themselves attached to the Protestant succession,[2] and that very few of them were prepared to make serious sacrifices for a restoration which might be injurious to the Church. Still, the natural issue of their teaching could not be mistaken. When the nation was called to choose between a sovereign whose title was lineal descent and a sovereign whose title rested upon a revolution and an Act of Parliament, there

[1] In addition to the older books I have cited, the reader may find much information on this curious subject in Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 15–21; Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 495–504; Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, pp. 428–439; Bishop Douglas' *Criterion*, pp. 195–210; Tindal's *Hist. of England*, Book xxvi.

[2] The ablest of the Tory clergy, writing with the object of repelling the charge of Jacobitism, says, 'The logick of the highest Tories is now that this was the Establishment they found as soon as they arrived at a capacity of judging, that they had no hand in turning out the late King, and, therefore, had no crime to answer for if it were any; that the inheritance to the crown is in pursuance of laws made ever since their remembrance, by which all Papists are excluded, and they have no other rule to go by; that they will no more dispute King William III.'s title than King William I.'s, since they must have recourse to history for both; that they have been instructed in the doctrines of passive obedience, non-resistance, and hereditary right, and find them all necessary for preserving the present Establishment in Church and State, and for continuing the succession in the House of Hanover, and must, in their own opinion, renounce all those doctrines by setting up any other title to the crown. This, I say, seemeth to be the political creed of all the high-principled I have for some time met with of forty years old and under.' Swift's *Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs*. The language commonly used about Charles I. is quite sufficient to show that the clergy were not as unhistorical as was alleged.

was not much doubt to which side the consistent adherent of the divine right of kings should incline. Had the Queen died during the excitement of the Sacheverell agitation, it is more than probable that the Pretender would have at once been summoned to the throne, and the strength of the Church party in England was the most serious danger which then menaced the parliamentary institutions of England. Monopolising, as it did, by its command of the universities, the higher education, and attracting by its great rewards a very large proportion of the talent of the country, its power in an age when there was very little serious scepticism among the educated, and no considerable rival organisation among the poor, appeared almost irresistible. The Church was the natural leader of the country gentry and peasants. Its influence ramified through all sections of society. Its pulpits were to thousands the sole vehicle of instruction.

Still, great as was its power, several influences had been at work undermining or restricting its authority. The Church had gained something at the Reformation in the increased credibility of its theology, and it had gained much more by purging away the taint of its foreign origin. In a country where the national sentiment was as strong and as insular as in England it would be difficult to overrate the accession of strength thus acquired. Italian intervention had been for centuries a source of perpetual irritation to the national sentiment, while the Church that was founded at the Reformation was of all institutions the most intensely and most distinctively English. Occasionally, indeed, great outbursts of political sycophancy or of sacerdotal extravagance within its borders have brought it into collision with the broad stream of English thought, but considered as a whole and in most periods of its history it may justly claim to have been eminently national. Its love of compromise, its dislike to pushing principles to extreme consequences, its decorum, its social aspects, its instinctive aversion to abstract speculation, to fanatical action, to vehement, spontaneous, mystical, or ascetic forms of devotion, its admirable skill in strengthening the orderly and philanthropic elements of society, in moderating and regulating character, and blending with the various phases of national life,

all reflected with singular fidelity English modes of thought and feeling, the strength and the weakness of the English character. But on the other hand ecclesiastical influence in England was seriously reduced at the Reformation, not only by the creation of the new doctrine of the royal supremacy, and by the abolition of some of the doctrines most favourable to ecclesiastical despotism, but also more directly by the expulsion of twenty-seven mitred abbots from the House of Lords, and the proportion of spiritual to lay peers has since then been continually diminishing by the increase of the latter. Before the abolition of the monasteries the spiritual peers formed a majority of the Upper House. Even after the removal of the abbots and priors they were about one-third; at present they are less than one-fifteenth.[1]

Accompanying this change there was a great revolution in the social position of the clergy. An enormous proportion of the revenues of the Church had been swept away by the confiscations under Henry VIII., and at the very time when the absolute or nominal incomes of the clergy were thus immensely reduced the great influx of American gold was lowering the value, or in other words, the purchasing power, of money more rapidly and more seriously than in any other recorded period. Besides this the abolition of the rule of celibacy, while it deprived the clergy of much of the dignity that belongs to a separate caste, greatly increased their usual wants. The force of these three causes reduced the great body of the parochial clergy to extreme destitution. In the time of Elizabeth they were often driven to become shoemakers or tailors in order to earn their bread,[2] and several generations passed before there was much perceptible improvement. 'The revenues of the English Church,' said a writer in the latter half of the seventeenth century, 'are generally very small and insufficient, so that a shopkeeper or common artisan would hardly change their conditions with ordinary pastors of the Church. This is the great reproach and shame of the English Reformation, and will one day prove the ruin of Church and State. The clergy . . . are accounted by many as the dross and refuse of

[1] Buckle's *Hist. of Civilisation*, i. 381.

[2] See Perry's *Hist. of the Church of England*, i. 7.

the nation. Men think it a stain to their blood to place their sons in that function, and women are ashamed to marry with any of them.'[1] Another writer, who wrote nearly at the same time, tells us that many hundreds of the parochial clergy lived on incomes of not more than 20*l.* to 30*l.* a-year. He describes the impoverished clergyman driven to fill the dung-cart or to heat the oven, and he notices especially the discredit reflected on the order by the fact that sons of clergymen were found holding horses or waiting on tapsters on account of the utter inability of their parents to provide for them.[2] At the time when Queen Anne's Bounty was granted, Burnet assures us there were still some hundreds of cures that had not a certain provision of 20*l.* a-year, and some thousands that had not 50*l.*[3] Swift, in a tract published a few years later, maintains that the position of the rural clergyman in England was better than that of the same class in Ireland, but his description of the English country clergyman amply corroborates all that has been said of his low social position. 'He liveth like an honest plain farmer, as his wife is dressed but little better than Goody. He is sometimes graciously invited by the squire, where he sitteth at humble distance. If he gets the love of his people they often make him little useful presents. He is happy by being born to no higher expectation, for he is usually the son of some ordinary tradesman or middling farmer. His learning is much of a size with his birth and education, no more of either than what a poor hungry servitor can be expected to bring with him from his college.'[4] The position of such a curate was by no means the worst. The system of pluralities, which had been necessary under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, partly on account of the small value of many benefices, and still more on account of the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of Reformed clergymen to officiate over England, had been much aggravated during the period that immediately followed the Act of Uniformity, and it produced a class of clergymen of the

[1] Chamberlayne's *Angliæ Notitiæ*, 3rd ed. (1669), pp. 367–369.

[2] Eachard's *Contempt of the Clergy*.

[3] Burnet's *Hist. of his Own Times*, ii. 370.

[4] *Considerations on Two Bills relating to the Clergy of Ireland* (1731).

lowest type. 'The cheapest curates,' wrote Archbishop Tennison to Queen Anne in 1713, 'are, notwithstanding the care of the bishops, too often chosen, especially by lay impropriators, some of whom have sometimes allowed but 5*l.* or 6*l.* a-year for the service of the Church, and such having no fixed place of abode, and a poor and precarious maintenance, are powerfully tempted to a kind of vagrant and dishonourable life, wandering for better subsistence from parish to parish, even from north to south.'[1] Some clergymen were hired by laymen to read prayers at their houses for 10*s.* a month, and many others lived as private chaplains either with noblemen or with country gentlemen at salaries of from 10*l.* to 30*l.* a year, with vales.[2] These clergymen were popularly known as Mess Johns, trencher chaplains, or young Levites. They were usually treated like upper menials. They lived on familiar terms with the servants, were made the butt of the squire and of his children, were dismissed from the dinner table as soon as the pastry appeared,[3] and if they had not already formed a connection with the cook and the housemaid, they often closed their career by purchasing some small living at the expense of a marriage with the cast-off mistress of their patron. This great evil has been attributed to the period of the civil war, when numbers of the proscribed clergy found shelter in the houses of small country gentry; but the trencher chaplains existed at an earlier date; they are vividly painted both by Bishop Hall[4] and by

[1] See a remarkable MSS. letter about pluralities, by the Archbishop, in the *Domestic Papers* at the Record-office, Jan. 1712–13.

[2] Compare Eachard's *Causes of the Contempt of the Clergy* (10th ed.), p. 25; Oldham's poem, *To a Friend about to leave the University*; Swift's *Project for the Advancement of Religion*,' the *Intelligencer*, No. 5.

[3] See a very curious collection of passages from the *Tatler* and *Guardian*, from Oldham's *Satires*, and from some other sources in Calamy's *Life*, pp. 217–219. So too Gay speaks of

> Cheese that the table's closing rites denies,
> And bids me with th' unwilling chaplain rise.
> *Trivia*, Book ii.

[4] A gentle squire would gladly entertain
Into his house some trencher chappelain,
Some willing man that might instruct his sons
And that could stand to good conditions:
First, that he lie upon the truckle bed
While his young maister lieth over-head;
Second, that he do on no default
Ever presume to sit above the salt;
Third, that he never charge his trencher twice;
Fourth, that he use all common courtesies,
Sit bare at moales, and one half rise and wait;

Burton,[1] and the results of their treatment were very evident. The Non-juror Lesley justly described it as one of the great causes of the discredit of the clergy that 'chaplains are now reckoned under the notion of servants,' and he complained that instead of being appointed by the bishops it was 'left to everyone's fancy (and some very unable to judge) to take in and turn out at their pleasure, as they do to their footmen, that they may be wholly subservient to their humour and their frolics, sometimes to their vices; and to play upon the chaplain is often the best part of the entertainment, and religion suffers with it.'[2] A cringing and obsequious character was naturally formed, and the playwriters found in these clergymen one of the easiest subjects for their ridicule. Even in the towns where the stamp was much superior, the clergy had their separate clubs and coffeehouses, mixed little with the laity, and were nervously apprehensive of ridicule.[3] The town rectors and the great church dignitaries were, it is true, second to none in Europe in genius and in learning, and they occupied a very conspicuous social position, but even they were by no means uniformly opulent. Swift assures us that there were at least ten bishoprics in England, whose incomes did not average 600*l.* a year.[4] The beautiful picture which Herbert has drawn of an ideal country clergyman shows that a high conception of clerical duty was not unknown among the rustic clergy; and Addison probably drew his portrait of the chaplain

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Last, that he never his young master beat
But he must aske his mother to define
How many jerks she would his breech should line;
All these observed, he would contented be
To give five markes and winter liverie.

Hall's *Satires*, Book ii. Sat. 6.

[1] *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part i. sec. 2, Mem. 3, Subs. 15.

[2] The *Case of the Regale and Pontificate stated.* See, too, the descriptions of these chaplains in Eachard and in the *Athenian Oracle* (3rd ed., vol. i. p. 542), and on their marriages a characteristic passage in Swift's *Directions to the Waiting Maid.* Macaulay's well-known description of the clergy in the latter part of the seventeenth century, has been very severely criticised in a little volume by Churchill Babington. It is clear that Macaulay greatly understated the number of men of good family that entered the Church, and his picture is, perhaps, in other respects a little over-coloured, but the passages I have cited, are, I think, quite sufficient to establish its substantial accuracy.

[3] Swift's *Project for the Advancement of Religion.*

[4] *Preface to the Bishop of Sarum's Introduction.*

of Sir Roger de Coverley from living examples;[1] but the class in the early years of the eighteenth century was necessarily ignorant and coarse, and an impoverished married clergy mix too closely in the secular affairs of life to retain the kind and degree of reverence with which the mendicant friar is often invested.

Something was done about the time of the Revolution to remedy these evils by private benevolence,[2] and Queen Anne's Bounty placed a sum of about 17,000*l.* a year at the disposal of the Church for the augmentation of small livings.[3] The custom of keeping chaplains, as distinguished from tutors, in great houses, fell about the same time into desuetude, and this fact was one cause of the general neglect of family worship during the Hanoverian period.[4] But though an amelioration of the social position of the clergy undoubtedly took place, it was very slow, and it was not until 1809 that Parliament adopted the policy of making direct grants for the augmentation of small livings. The low social position of the country clergy did not prevent them from forming one of the most powerful forces in the country, but it no doubt enfeebled the Church interest, which might have otherwise been irresistible in English politics. The practice of bestowing high political posts upon clergymen almost disappeared in England after the Reformation; the last instance of the kind was under Queen Anne, when the Privy Seal was bestowed on Robinson, the Bishop of Bristol, but in Ireland, as we shall see, political affairs were largely administered by prelates at a much later period. The power of imposing direct taxation on the clergy had from a very early date been reserved for Convocation, whose enactments, however, on this point required the confirmation of Parliament, but in 1664 the right of self-taxation was withdrawn from the Church; Convocation thus lost its most important prerogative, and the loss was not at all adequately supplied by the privilege of voting for members of parliament, which was then bestowed on the clergy. The attitude of the Church towards the Revolution still further weakened its

[1] *Spectator*, No. 106.

[2] Eachard notices that bishops had done something to augment the vicarages in their dioceses.

[3] Burnet's *Hist. of his Own Times*, ii. 369. It was at first, however, encumbered by some very heavy charges. See Hodgson's account of *Queen Anne's Bounty*, p. 8.

[4] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 655.

influence. The servile doctrine of passive obedience which it proclaimed when the liberties of England seemed tottering to their fall; its virtual abandonment of that doctrine the moment its own interests were touched; its vacillation and ultimate disloyalty when the Government of William was established; the non-juror schism which divided its influence, withdrew from it many of its most energetic teachers, and affixed an imputation of time-serving on those who remained; the Toleration Act, which enabled Dissenters to celebrate their worship under the protection of the law; and lastly, the abjuration oath, which brought into strong relief the contrast between the principles and the conduct of a large proportion of the clergy, were all steps in emancipating England from ecclesiastical despotism. It was impossible to disguise the fact that the Government was based upon and could only be justified by principles directly antagonistic to those which the majority of the clergy had taught as essential doctrines of their Church.

There was one other agency at work which was partly favourable and partly unfavourable to the Church. There existed among the clergy a small body of able and enlightened men who had adopted the principles of Locke and Chillingworth, who cordially welcomed the civil and religious liberty established by the Revolution, and who, regarding with considerable contempt the minute questions that created such animosity between the High Church clergy and the Dissenters, were themselves hated by their brethren with all the virulence of theological rancour. The most prominent, and to the majority of the clergy the most obnoxious of them, was Burnet, whose promotion to the bishopric of Salisbury was the first and most significant of the Church appointments of William. Scarcely any other figure in English ecclesiastical history has been so fully portrayed, and the lines of his character are indeed too broad and clear to be overlooked. No one can question that he was vain, pushing, boisterous, indiscreet, and inquisitive, overflowing with animal spirits and superabundant energy, singularly deficient in the tact, delicacy, reticence, and decorum that are needed in a great ecclesiastical position. Having thrown himself, with all the

enthusiasm of his nature, into the cause of the Revolution from the very beginning of the design, he became one of the most active politicians of his time. He was a constant pamphleteer and debater. On at least one occasion, when he advocated the Act of Attainder that brought Sir John Fenwick to the scaffold, he stooped to services that were very little in harmony with his profession. He was one of the last writers of authority who countenanced the fable of the supposititious birth of the Pretender, and in many other points he allowed the passions of a violent partizan to discolour that brilliant history which is one of the most authentic records of the times of the Revolution. But if his faults were very manifest, they were much more than balanced by great virtues and splendid acquirements. He was a man of real honesty and indomitable courage; of a kind, generous, and affectionate nature, of fervent piety, of wide sympathies, of rare tolerance. In the time of the Stuarts he had more than once refused lucrative employments through conscientious motives; he had boldly remonstrated with Charles upon his vices; he had reclaimed the brilliant Rochester to the paths of virtue; he was one of the very few Whigs who never countenanced the delusion of the Popish plot. He was the friend of Russell, whom he attended on the scaffold. He had received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for the publication of that great 'History of the Reformation,' which was one of the strongest and most enduring barriers to the Catholic tendencies of the age of the Stuarts. Raised to power by the Revolution, he made it the supreme object of his life to extend religious liberty to all English Protestants, and, if possible, to bring the great Nonconforming bodies into union with the Church. His own mother had been an ardent Presbyterian. In Holland and in Switzerland he had formed intimate connections with members of different creeds; and, while maintaining a strong and fervent orthodoxy of doctrinal belief, he soon convinced himself that the points of discipline or ceremony that chiefly divided the Established Church from Nonconformity were immaterial, and he was quite ready to purchase unity by surrendering the cross at baptism, the surplice, and the custom of chanting prayers, and even by abandoning or modifying the subscription to the Articles. With these principles he was naturally the foremost

advocate of every measure for removing the disabilities of the Dissenters, while on the other hand, he tried to save the High Church clergy from the obligation of taking the abjuration oath; and although on grounds of political necessity he supported the laws against the Catholics, and the expulsion of the non-jurors, he is said, in particular instances, to have shown much kindness to members of both bodies. He also laboured alone in 1709 to abolish the penalty of confiscation for treason, which ruined the children of Jacobites for the faults of their parents.

Hardly any other member of the Whig party excited such violent hostility. During his life he was the constant object of the most scurrilous abuse. His coffin was insulted by the mob as it was borne to the tomb,[1] and his memory has been pursued, even to our own day, with implacable hatred by a large section of his brethren. His eminently masculine mind looked down with undisguised contempt on the questions that were most dear to the Church, and he never lost an opportunity of expressing his indignation at the perpetual attempts that were made to excite popular animosity against the Dissenters, and at the pretensions to sacerdotal power which were the root and the essence of the High Church teaching. At the same time his bitterest detractors were unable with any colour of reason to deny either his talents, his piety, or the great services he rendered to the Church. In intellectual ability, Atterbury and Swift could alone, in the High Church ranks, be compared with him; but Atterbury was a mere brilliant incendiary, and was tainted with the guilt of the most deliberate perjury; while Swift was evidently wholly unsuited to his profession, and his splendid but morbid genius was fatally stained by coarseness, scurrility, and profanity. Burnet, whatever may have been his faults, had at least never written a line at which the most modest need blush, and he was one of the most active and laborious clergymen, one of the most considerable theologians, one of the ablest religious writers in the Church. His work on the Thirty-nine Articles is perhaps the most accredited exposition of the doctrines of Anglicanism. He had originally suggested to Mary the scheme of applying the firstfruits to the augmentation of small livings, which was afterwards carried

[1] See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1788, p. 952.

out by Anne. His influence probably contributed more than any other single cause to prevent the Whig party from being wholly severed from the Church. His sermons, delivered extempore, and with the most fervid and impassioned earnestness, made an impression which was remembered long after with regret during the stagnation of the Hanoverian period.[1] As a bishop, his censors were compelled reluctantly to admit that, if no one took a lower view of sacerdotal pretensions, no one insisted on, or himself maintained, a higher standard of clerical duty. It might easily have been expected that a life spent in great literary and political labours would have proved a bad preparation for the petty and often irksome administrative duties of a bishopric. Burnet himself appears to have been conscious of the danger. Few things in religious biography are more touching than the discriminating, delicate, and tender strokes with which he delineated the infirmity of Usher,[2] who had allowed the saintly gentleness of his temper to interfere with the rough work of reforming abuses, who flinched too often at the prospect of opposition and discord, and buried himself in private devotions and profound studies, while he ought to have been engaged in the active duties of his diocese. But no such charge could be brought against Burnet. No English bishop exhibited a greater activity in combating the evil of pluralities; in watching over the character and education of his clergy; in making himself intimately acquainted with the wants and circumstances of the parishes under his care, than this great scholar and active politician.[3]

The small school of latitudinarian divines, among whom Burnet was conspicuous, counted several other names eminent for learning and piety. It had grown up chiefly at Cambridge at the time when Cudworth, Henry More, Wilkins, and Thomas Burnet were the leading intellects of that university, and the

[1] See the striking testimony of Speaker Onslow, in a note to *Burnet*, ii. 721. Dartmouth noticed that the vehemence of Burnet's delivery impaired the effect of his speaking in the House of Lords.

[2] *Life of Bedell*, pp. 85–87.

[3] Nearly everything that can be said against Burnet will be found in the annotations to the Oxford edition of his history. See too Hickes' scurrilous attack and the severe criticism in Lathbury's *History of the Non-jurors*, pp. 69–75. His best defence is in his own works and in his life by Thomas Burnet. I need hardly refer to the admirable character of Burnet in Macaulay's History, ch. vii.

Revolution thrust it into a prominence it would not naturally have assumed. William, as might have been expected, turned to it in the selection of his bishops; and owing to deaths and to the expulsion of the Nonjurors, he had soon no less than fifteen bishoprics to fill. Among the new prelates were, Patrick, who was author of devotional works which are still occasionally read, and who was famous for his skill in the composition of prayers; Cumberland, who will always be remembered as the defender of the doctrine of an innate law of nature against the Utilitarianism of Hobbes; Stillingfleet, the antagonist of Locke, and one of the most profound scholars of his age; and Tillotson, who was incontestably the most popular of living preachers. A great change had passed over the character of pulpit oratory a few years before the Revolution, chiefly under the influence of the last-named divine, who finally discredited the false taste which, since the days of James I., had been prevalent, and which has been ascribed in a great degree to the success and example of Bishop Andrewes.[1] The passion for long, involved sentences, for multitudinous divisions, for ingenious and far-fetched conceits, and for great displays of patristic and classical learning, passed away, and a clearer and less ornate style became popular. The change was somewhat analogous to that which had passed over English poetry between the time of Cowley and Donne and that of Dryden and Pope; and over English prose between the time of Glanvil and Browne and that of Addison and Swift. Nor was it merely in the form. Appeals both to authority and to the stronger passions gradually ceased. The more doctrinal aspects of religion were softened down or suffered silently to recede, and, before the eighteenth century had much advanced, sermons had very generally become mere moral essays, characterised chiefly by a cold good sense, and appealing almost exclusively to prudential motives. The essay writers, whose works consisted in a great measure of short moral dissertations, set the literary taste of the age; and they had a powerful effect on the pulpit. The popularity of the sermons of Secker greatly strengthened the tendency,[2] and it was only towards the close of the century that the influence of the

[1] Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, p. 20–21. Evelyn's *Diary*, July 15, 1683.

[2] Walpole's *Mem. of George II.* vol. i. pp. 65–66.

Methodist movement, extending gradually through the Established Church, introduced a more emotional, and at the same time a more dogmatic, type of preaching.

The results of these numerous latitudinarian appointments after the Revolution were very remarkable. The bishops as a body soon constituted the most moderate, the most liberal, the most emphatically Protestant portion of the clergy, and they had every disposition to enter into alliance with the Dissenters. Burnet had been the strongest advocate of the Comprehension Bill, and, as he has himself informed us, he had no scruple in communicating with non-episcopal churches in Holland and Geneva. Kidder was suspected of a leaning towards Presbyterianism. Stillingfleet, though in his later life he was much less latitudinarian than his colleagues, had accepted a living in Cambridgeshire at a time when Episcopacy was proscribed. Patrick had been educated as a Dissenter, had received his first orders from the Presbytery during the Commonwealth, and had taken a prominent part, in conjunction with Burnet, Tillotson, and Stillingfleet, in the scheme of comprehension. Tillotson himself was avowedly of the school of Chillingworth, and if we may believe the assertion of Hickes, he had shown his indifference to forms very practically by allowing communicants to receive the sacrament sitting, if they were foolish enough to object to receiving it kneeling. The measure which aroused the strongest clerical indignation in the reign of Anne was undoubtedly the impeachment of Sacheverell, but seven out of twelve bishops voted for his condemnation. The measures which excited the warmest clerical enthusiasm were the Occasional Conformity and the Schism Acts, but the majority of the bishops opposed the first Act both in 1703, when it was ardently supported by the Court, and in 1704, when the Court held aloof from it, and five bishops signed a protest against the second. In the eyes of the majority of the bishops the Church of England was emphatically a Protestant Church, and the differences between the Establishment and the chief Nonconformist bodies were on matters of comparatively little moment. They were in this respect of the school of Leighton, and still more clearly of the school of Chillingworth, and there can be no doubt that they carried with them the great body of educated laymen in the towns. Three

men—Chillingworth, Locke, and Tillotson—had set the current of religious thought in this class, and their influence extended with but little abatement through the greater part of the eighteenth century. On the other hand the great body of the clergy, who hated the Revolution, the Toleration Act, and the Dissenters, and who perceived with rage and indignation that political ascendancy was passing from their hands, strained all their energies to aggrandise their priestly power, and to envenom the difference between themselves and the Nonconformists. The Nonjuror theology represented this tendency in its extreme form, and exercised a wide influence beyond its border. The writers of this school taught that Episcopalian clergymen were as literally priests as were the Jewish priests, though they belonged not to the order of Aaron, but to the higher order of Melchisedek; that the communion was literally and not metaphorically a sacrifice; that properly constituted clergymen had the power of uttering words over the sacred elements which produced the most wonderful, though unfortunately the most imperceptible, of miracles; that the right of the clergy to tithes was of direct divine origin, antecedent to and independent of all secular legislation; that the sentence of excommunication involved an exclusion from heaven; that the Romish practice of prayers for the dead was highly commendable; that the Church of England, in violently severing itself from the authority of the Pope, proscribing the religious worship which before the Reformation had been universal in Christendom, persecuting even to death numbers who were guilty only of remaining attached to the old order of things, and branding a leading portion of its former theology as 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits,' had done no act at all savouring of schism, but that all non-episcopal communities who dissented from the Anglican Church were schismatics, guilty of the sin and reserved for the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Aiming especially at sacerdotal power, these theologians had naturally a strong leaning towards the communities in which that power had been most successfully claimed, and negotiations were accordingly at one time opened for union with the Gallican, at another with the Eastern Church. Some of them contended that all baptisms except those by Episcopalian clergymen were not

only irregular but invalid, and that therefore Dissenters had no kind of title to be regarded as Christians. Brett, some time before he joined the sect, preached and published a sermon maintaining that repentance itself was useless unless it were followed by priestly absolution, which could only be administered by an Episcopalian clergyman, and both Dodwell and Lesley were of opinion that such absolution was essential to salvation. The former of these writers, who was perhaps the most learned of the party, contended in one of his works that 'there is no communicating with the Father or the Son but by communion with the bishops;' in another that all marriages between members of different religious creeds are of the nature of adultery; in a third that even the immortality of the soul is ordinarily dependent upon the intervention of a bishop. Our souls, he thought, are naturally mortal, but become immortal by baptism, if administered by an Episcopalian clergyman. Pagans and unbaptised infants cease to exist at death; but Dissenters who have neglected to enter the Episcopalian fold are kept alive by a special exercise of the divine power in order that they may be, after death, eternally damned.[1]

It was in this conflict of opinions during the reign of Anne that the terms High and Low Church first came into use,[2] and it is a very remarkable fact that the episcopacy was the special representative of the latter. The one party, which included many grades of sacerdotal pretension, and was characterised by intense hatred of Dissenters, carried with it the sympathy of the great body of the country clergy, of the country gentry, and of the poor. The other party consisted of perhaps one-tenth of the clergy,[3] but it contained a very disproportionate number of adherents of high position and of great ability, and it exercised a commanding influence over the educated classes in the towns. The co-existence of these two schools adapted to different orders

[1] See Dodwell's *One Priesthood*, his *Discourse on the Obligation to Marry within the True Communion*, annexed to Lesley's *Sermon against Mixed Marriages*, and his *Discourse on the Soul* 'wherein is proved that none have the power of giving this Divine immortalising spirit since the apostles, but only the bishops.' For the other Nonjuror notions, see especially the works of Hickes, Lesley, and Brett. Lathbury, in his *History of the Nonjurors*, has summarised many of their works. See too Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 603, 604.

[2] Burnet, ii. 347.

[3] Macaulay.

of mind and education may perhaps have in some cases extended the religious influence of the Church, but it in a great degree paralysed its political action. One feature of the struggle has been curiously reproduced in our own day. It might have been imagined from the solemnity of the ordination vow, and from the peculiar sanctity supposed to attach to the clerical profession, that clergymen would be distinguished from lawyers, soldiers, and members of other mere secular professions by their deference and obedience to their superiors. It might have been imagined that this would have been especially true of men who were continually preaching the duty of passive obedience in the sphere of politics, and the transcendant and almost divine prerogatives of episcopacy in the sphere of religion. As a matter of fact, however, this has not been the case. If the most constant, contemptuous, and ostentatious defiance both of civil and ecclesiastical authorities be a result of the Protestant principle of private judgment, it may be truly said that the extreme High Church party, in more than one period of its history, has shown itself, in this respect at least, the most Protestant of sects. While idolising episcopacy in the abstract, its members have made it a main object of their policy to bring most existing bishops into contempt, and their polemical writings have been conspicuous, even in theological literature, for their feminine spitefulness, and for their recklessness of assertion. The last days of Tillotson were altogether embittered by the stream of calumny, invective, and lampoons of which he was the object. One favourite falsehood, repeated in spite of the clearest disproof, was that he had never been baptised. He was charged, without a shadow of foundation, with infamous conduct during his collegiate life. He was accused of Hobbism. He was accused, like Burnet and Patrick, of being a Socinian, though the plainest passages were cited from his writings, as well as from those of his colleagues, asserting the divinity of Christ. One writer, who was eulogised by Hickes as a person 'of great candour and judgment,' described the Archbishop as 'an atheist as much as a man could be, though the gravest certainly that ever was.'[1] Nor was this a mere transient ebullition

[1] Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, p. 269. Dr. Jortin says, 'I heard Dr. B. say in a sermon, "If anyone denies the uninterrupted succession of bishops,

of scurrility. All through the reign of Anne, and for several years of the Hanoverian period, the bishops were the objects of the incessant and virulent attacks of the High Church party. Bishops complained pathetically in Parliament of the factions formed and fomented in their dioceses by their own clergy, 'of the opprobrious names the clergy gave their bishops, and the calumnies they laid on them, as if they were in a plot to destroy the Church.'[1] 'One would be provoked by the late behaviour of the bishops,' said a prominent Tory member under Anne, 'to bring in a bill for the toleration of episcopacy, for, since they are of just the same principles with the Dissenters, it is but just, I think, that they should stand on the same foot.'[2] A satirist of the day faithfully and wittily described the prevailing High Church sentiments when he represented the Tory fox-hunter thinking the neighbouring shire very happy in having 'scarce a Presbyterian in it—except the bishop!'[3]

The antagonism between the higher and lower clergy was very apparent in Convocation. This body, from the time when it was deprived of its taxing functions, had sunk into insignificance. Having crushed the scheme of William for uniting the Dissenters with the Church, a period of ten years elapsed before it again sat. The clergy, however, at last grew impatient. An anonymous 'Letter to a Convocation Man,' which appeared in 1696, asserting the right of Convocation to meet for the transaction of business whenever the lay Parliament was summoned, excited a violent controversy in the ecclesiastical world, which raged for several years, and in which the most remarkable disputants were Wake and Kennet on the side of the civil power, and Atterbury on the side of Convocation. In 1701 the two Houses of Convocation were again summoned to meet, and they immediately plunged into a contest. They wrangled about the limits of their authority, about the right of the Lower House to adjourn or prolong its debates independently of the Upper House, about an address which the Lower House desired

I shall not scruple to call him a downright atheist." . . . This when I was young was sound, orthodox, and fashionable doctrine.'—Jortin's *Tracts*, i. 436.

[1] See, *e.g.*, the complaints of Patrick, Hough, and Burnet. *Parl. Hist.* vi. 496–497.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 154.

[3] *Freeholder*, No. 22.

to present on the accession of Anne, reflecting injuriously upon her predecessor, about the right of Convocation to pass judicial censures on men and books, about several minute points of order. The Lower House condemned Burnet's book on the Thirty-nine Articles, which is now one of the classics of the Church. It censured at different periods Toland, Clarke, and Whiston. It passed resolutions lamenting the immorality of the age, denouncing the theatre, and pointing out that a Unitarian congregation had been allowed to meet, and that Popish and Quaker books were disseminated. It also, in conjunction with the Upper House, drew up some forms of prayer for special occasions; but, on the whole, its performances were so trivial, and the tone of the Lower House to the bishops was so petulant, that it served chiefly to discredit the character and to impair the influence of the Church.

These considerations will, I hope, be sufficient to explain why it was that the Church party, though it was naturally incomparably the most powerful in England, and was in general animated by a spirit of intense Toryism, was unable to overthrow the religious settlement that had been made at the Revolution. That the danger was very serious cannot reasonably be denied. Politics had passed into the pulpit to a degree unknown in England since the Commonwealth.[1] The Toleration Act, the establishment of the Kirk in Scotland, and perhaps still more the seminaries which, on account of their exclusion from the Universities, the Dissenters had lately set up for the education of their sons, were the object of the bitterest hatred of the High Church party. But the efforts of that party were only very partially successful. In Scotland, although there were some thoughts of the restoration of Episcopacy,[2] the new establishment was confirmed by the Union, but the Tories carried in 1712 a very righteous Act securing toleration to the Scotch Episcopalians, as well as an Act which has proved fertile in division,

[1] 'Les ecclesiastiques auroient en même temps grand besoin d'une réforme, mais personne veut toucher icy à une corde si delicate; ils se mêlent tous de politique; c'est la morale qu'ils traitent dans leur sermon. On l'abolira d'autant moins que les deux partis croyent trouver tour à tour leur conte dans cette métode.'—Baron de Bothmar to the Electress Sophia, April 10, 1711. Kemble's *State Papers*, p. 480.

[2] See Stanhope's *Hist. of Queen Anne*, i. 97.

even to our own day, taking away from the Presbyterian elders and heritors in each parish the right of choosing their ministers, which had been granted them at the Revolution, and restoring in a restricted form the old system of lay patronage. A third measure, which would appear almost too trivial to be noticed, were it not for the violent outcry it created among the more rigid Presbyterians, revived the old 'Yule Vacance,' or Christmas holidays, in the law courts, and also made the 30th of January a legal holiday. In Ireland the worst of the penal laws, which in this reign were enacted against the Catholics, originated with the Whig party, but the imposition of the sacramental test on the Irish Protestant Dissenters, though it took place at a time when the Tory power was tottering, was probably due to Tory influence. The history of this measure is a curious one. The Irish Parliament in 1703 having carried an atrocious penal law against the Catholics, sent it over to England for the necessary ratification. It was returned, with an additional clause extending, for the first time, the Test Act to Ireland. According to the constitutional arrangements then prevailing, the Irish Parliament could not alter a Bill returned from England, though it might reject it altogether, and, in order to save the anti-Popery clauses of the Bill, it reluctantly accepted the test clause. Burnet ascribes the introduction of the clause to the desire of the English ministers to throw out the whole Bill, which they imagined the Irish Parliament would refuse to ratify if burdened with the test,[1] but this explanation is very improbable. The Irish House of Commons only contained ten or twelve Presbyterians. It had recently shown its hostility to the Presbyterians by voting the *Regium Donum* an unnecessary expense, and, although it had not demanded the test, there was no reason to believe it would make any serious resistance to its imposition.[2] The simplest explanation is probably the true one. The ministry consisted of two parts, the party of Godolphin and Marlborough, who, on the ground of foreign policy, but on this alone, were rapidly approximating to the Whigs, and the party of Nottingham, who was vehemently

[1] *Hist. of his Own Time*, ii. 361–362.

[2] Killen's *Ecclesiastical Hist. of Ireland*, ii. 191, 198.

Tory, and who made it the very first object of his home policy to increase the stringency of the Test Act. These two sections were rapidly diverging, and it was only by much management and compromise that they were kept together. It is probable the Irish Test Act was due to the influence of Nottingham, and was accepted the more readily as it applied to a country which had then no weight in English politics, and excited no interest in the English mind.[1] In the same spirit the Tory ministry, in the closing years of Anne, suspended the *Regium Donum*—a small annual endowment which William had given towards the support of the Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. In England a Bill for the repeal of the Act naturalising foreign Protestants was carried through the Commons in 1711, but rejected by the Lords. In the following year, however, it became law, and the Tory House of Commons in 1711 also manifested its ecclesiastical zeal by voting a duty of 1*s.* on every chaldron of coal for three years, to be applied to the erection of fifty new churches in London.[2]

The subject, however, around which the ecclesiastical struggle raged most fiercely was the Occasional Conformity Bill. The Test Act making the reception of the Anglican Sacrament a necessary qualification for becoming a member of corporations, and for the enjoyment of most civil offices, was very efficacious in excluding Catholics, but was altogether insufficient to exclude moderate Dissenters, whose nonconformity was solely due to a preference for a presbyterian to an episcopal form of worship, or to disagreement with some petty detail in the church discipline or doctrine. Such men, while habitually

[1] According to Calamy the clause 'was commonly said to have been inserted here in Council by the Lords Nottingham and Rochester, after the Bill was sent from Ireland.' Calamy's *Life*, ii. 28. See too Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 186–190.

[2] A similar duty had formerly been employed in building St. Paul's. Somers' *Tracts*, xii. p. 328. Swift, in 1709, had forcibly called attention to the want in a passage which is said to have given rise to the bill. 'Parliament ought to take under consideration whether it be not a shame to our country and a scandal to Christianity that in many towns where there is a prodigious increase in the number of houses and inhabitants, so little care should be taken for the building of churches, that five parts in six of the people are absolutely hindered from hearing Divine service? Particularly here in London, where a single minister with one or two sorry curates, has the care sometimes of above 20,000 souls incumbent on him—a neglect of religion so ignominious, in my opinion, that it can hardly be equalled in any civilised age or country.'—*A Project for the Advancement of Religion.*

attending their own places of worship, had no scruple about occasionally entering an Anglican church, or receiving the sacrament from an Anglican clergyman. The Independents, it is true, and some of the Baptists, censured this practice, and Defoe wrote vehemently against it, but it was very general, and was supported by a long list of imposing authorities. It was remembered that the very year of the Act of Uniformity the principal ejected ministers in London had met together and resolved that they would occasionally attend the services of the Anglican Church and communicate at its altars.[1] The great names of Baxter, Howe, and Henry might be cited in favour of occasional conformity, and their opinion was adopted by the whole body of the Presbyterians. In the city of London the Dissenters were numerous and opulent, and they soon acquired an important place in the Corporation. Sir John Shorter, who became Lord Mayor of London in the year of the Revolution, was a Dissenter, and, having died during his year of office, his place was supplied by Sir John Eyles, who was of the same persuasion. Sir Humphry Edwin, who was also a Presbyterian, was elected Lord Mayor in 1697, and he greatly strengthened the growing feeling against occasional conformity by very imprudently going in state, with the regalia of the City, to a Dissenting meeting-house. From this time the High Church party made the prohibition of occasional conformity a main object of their policy. Another Dissenter, Sir John Abney, became Lord Mayor in 1701, and in the following year the question was brought into Parliament. In 1702, in 1703, and in 1704, measures for suppressing occasional conformity were carried through the Commons, but on each occasion they were defeated by the Whig preponderance in the Lords. In 1702 the question gave rise to a free conference between the Houses. In 1704, as we have already seen, an attempt was unsuccessfully made to tack the measure to a Money Bill. From this time the question was suffered to drop until the Sacheverell agitation had annihilated the Whig ministry and the Whig majority in the Commons. It revived in 1711, but a very singular transformation of parts took place. The Tories were completely in the ascendant in the House of Com-

[1] See Hunt's *Hist. of Religious Thought in England*, ii. 314.

mons, but it was in the House of Lords that the measure was first brought forward, and it was carried without a division. The explanation of the change is very easy. The Whig party had at this time made it their main object to defeat the negotiations that led to the Peace of Utrecht. A section of the extreme Tories, guided by Nottingham, concurred with this view, but they made it the condition of alliance that the Occasional Conformity Bill should be accepted by the Whigs. The bargain was made; the Dissenters were abandoned, and, on the motion of Nottingham, a measure was carried providing that all persons in places of profit or trust, and all common councilmen in Corporations, who, while holding office, were proved to have attended any Nonconformist place of worship, should forfeit the place, and should continue incapable of public employment till they should depose that for a whole year they had not attended a conventicle. The House of Commons added a fine of 40*l.* which was to be paid to the informer, and with this addition the Bill became law. Its effects during the few years it continued in force were very inconsiderable, for the great majority of conspicuous Dissenters remained in office, abstaining from public worship in conventicles, but having Dissenting ministers as private chaplains in their houses.

The House of Lords, and especially the Whig party, have been very bitterly censured for their desertion of the Nonconformists on this occasion, but their conduct is not, I think, incapable of defence. Three times the House of Commons, by a large majority, had carried the Bill. Since the measure had last been introduced the election of 1710 had taken place. It had turned expressly upon Church questions, and it proved, beyond all dispute, that the country was on the side of the High Church party. Neither as a matter of principle, nor as a matter of policy, ought the House of Lords to oppose a permanent veto to the wish of the great majority of the Lower House, when that wish clearly reflects the sentiments of the nation. There can be no question that the House of Commons would have carried the measure by a majority at least as large as in former years, and it was stated that the Court was resolved to use its utmost powers to make it law. Under these circumstances the Lords might

justly consider that they were consulting their own dignity by taking the first step when concession was inevitable; that a measure, mitigated in some of its provisions by amicable compromise, and taking its rise in a friendly rather than an unfriendly House, was likely to be less injurious to the Dissenters than a measure framed by a hostile party, and carried by another explosion of fanaticism; and, lastly, that it was for the advantage of the nation that the opportunity should not be lost of endeavouring by a coalition of parties to avert the great evils apprehended from the peace.

The object of the Occasional Conformity Bill was to exclude the Dissenters from all Government positions of power, dignity, or profit. It was followed in 1714 by the Schism Act, which was intended to crush their seminaries and deprive them of the means of educating their children in their faith. The seminaries of the Dissenters had been severely noticed in a dedication of the second part of Lord Clarendon's history to Queen Anne, which was ascribed to the pen of Rochester, by the Archbishop of York in the House of Lords, and by Bromley in the House of Commons, and they were denounced with extraordinary violence, as schools of immorality and sedition, by Sacheverell, and by Samuel Wesley, the father of the great founder of Methodism. They appear to have been ably conducted, and it is a curious fact that both Archbishop Secker and Bishop Butler were partly educated at the dissenting academy of Tewkesbury.[1] The measure for suppressing them was one of the most tyrannical enacted in the eighteenth century, and it appears especially shameful from the fact that those who took the most prominent part in carrying it were acting without the excuse of religious bigotry. Bolingbroke, who introduced it in the Lords, and Windham, who introduced it in the Commons, were both men of the laxest principles, and of the laxest morals, and it was finally defended by the former mainly on the ground that it was necessary for the party interest of the Tories to prevent the propagation of Dissent.[2] As carried through the House of Commons it provided that no one, under pain of three months' imprisonment, should keep either a public or a private school, or should

[1] Calamy's *Life*, ii. 503.
[2] Bolingbroke, Letter to Windham.

even act as tutor or usher, unless he had obtained a licence from the Bishop, had engaged to conform to the Anglican liturgy, and had received the sacrament in some Anglican church within the year. In order to prevent occasional conformity it was further provided that if a teacher so qualified were present at any other form of worship he should at once become liable to three months' imprisonment, and should be incapacitated for the rest of his life from acting as schoolmaster or tutor. In order to prevent latitudinarian Anglicans from teaching Dissenting formularies, a clause was carried, making any licensed teacher who taught any catechism other than that of the Church of England liable to all the penalties of the Act. The Bill was supported by the whole weight of the Tory ministry, and was carried in the House of Commons by 237 to 126 votes. In the House of Lords the feeling against it was very strong, but the recent creation of twelve peers had weakened the ascendancy of the Whigs. It is remarkable, however, that on this occasion Nottingham himself spoke on the side of religious liberty. The Dissenters petitioned to be heard by counsel against the Bill, but their petition was rejected. The measure having been defended, among other reasons, by the allegation that many children of Churchmen had been attracted to Nonconformist schools, Halifax moved that the Dissenters might have schools for the exclusive education of children of their own persuasion, but he was defeated by 62 against 48, and the Bill was finally carried through the Lords by 77 to 72. Some important clauses, however, were introduced by the Whig party qualifying its severity. They provided that Dissenters might have schoolmistresses to teach their children to read; that the Act should not extend to any person instructing youth in reading, writing, or arithmetic, in any part of mathematics relating to navigation, or in any mechanical art only; that tutors in the houses of noblemen should be exempt from the necessity of obtaining an episcopal licence; and that the infliction of penalties under the Act should be removed from the jurisdiction of the justices of the peace, and placed under that of the superior courts.

The facility with which this atrocious Act was carried, abundantly shows the danger in which religious liberty was placed in the latter years of the reign of Queen Anne. There

can, indeed, be little doubt that, had the Tory ascendancy been but a little prolonged, the Toleration Act would have been repealed, and it is more than doubtful whether the purely political conquests of the Revolution would have survived. The more, indeed, those very critical years are examined the more evident it becomes on how slender a chain of causes the political future of England then depended. There can be little doubt that if, while the Pretender remained a Catholic, a son of Anne had survived, he would have mounted the throne amid the acclamations of the English people, and would have been the object of an enthusiasm of unqualified loyalty even more intense than that which was subsequently bestowed upon George III. There can also, I think, be little doubt that if, after the death of the children of Anne, the Pretender had consented to conform to the English Church, the immense majority of the people would have reverted irresistibly to the legitimate heir. It is less certain, but far from improbable, that if the life of the Queen had been prolonged for a single year, the Act of Settlement would have been disregarded, and the Pretender, in spite of his Catholicism, would have been brought back by a Tory ministry. In order, however, to understand the position of parties at the time of the death of the Queen it will be necessary to turn from domestic affairs to foreign politics, and to give a brief outline of the chief work of the Tory ministry—the negotiation of the Peace of Utrecht.

At the time when this momentous measure was carried, the political aspects of the war had in some respects very materially changed. When the Whig ministry fell, the chances of Philip of Spain inheriting the crown of France were so remote that they might have been almost disregarded, but the shadows of death soon fell darkly around the French King. In February 1710–11 the Dauphin fell sick of small-pox complicated with fever, and after a short illness he died, leaving as his heir the young pupil of Fénelon, whose virtues and solid acquirements had inspired ardent hopes, only too soon to be overcast. In February 1711–12 the wife of the new Dauphin was seized with a deadly sickness, and in a few days she expired. A week had hardly passed when her husband followed her to the tomb, and in another month the elder of her two

children was also dead. Thus, by a strange fatality which gave rise to the darkest suspicions, three successive heirs to the French throne, representing three successive generations, had, in little more than a year, been swept away, and the old King and a sickly infant alone remained between Philip and the crown of France. On the Austrian side the change was even more important. The Emperor Leopold I., who began the war, had died in May 1705. His successor, Joseph I., died in April 1711, leaving no son, and Charles, the Austrian claimant, now wore the Imperial crown.

The military conditions in the meantime had not been very seriously modified. France was still reduced to extreme and abject wretchedness. Her finances were ruined. Her people were half starving. Marlborough declared that in the villages through which he passed in the summer of 1710, at least half the inhabitants had perished since the beginning of the preceding winter, and the rest looked as if they had come out of their graves.[1] All the old dreams of French conquests in the Spanish Netherlands, in Italy, and in Germany were dispelled, and the French generals were now struggling desperately and skilfully to defend their own frontier. The campaign of 1709 had been marked by the capture of Menin and Tournay by the allies, by the bloody victory of Malplaquet, in which the losses of the conquerors were nearly double the losses of the conquered, and finally by the capture of Mons. In 1710, while the Whig ministry was still in power, but at a time when it was manifestly tottering to its fall, Lewis had made one more attempt to obtain peace by the most ample concessions. The conferences were held at the Dutch fortress of Gertruydenberg. Lewis declared himself ready to accept the conditions exacted as preliminaries of peace in the preceding year; with the exception of the article compelling Philip within two months to cede the Spanish throne. He consented, in the course of the negotiations, to grant to the Dutch nearly all the fortresses of the French and Spanish Netherlands, including among others Ypres, Tournay, Lille, Furnes, and even Valenciennes, to cede Alsace to the Duke of Lorraine, to destroy the fortifications of

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxxviii. See, too, the striking description of the country by Fénelon, in Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 528-529.

Dunkirk, and those on the Rhine from Bâle to Philipsburg. The main difficulty was on the question of the Spanish succession. The French urged that Philip would never voluntarily abdicate unless he received some compensation in Italy or elsewhere, and the Dutch and English ministers now seemed inclined to accept the proposition, but the opposition of the Emperor and of the Duke of Savoy was inflexible. The French troops had already been recalled from Spain, and Lewis consented to recognise the Archduke as the sovereign, to engage to give no more assistance to his grandchild, to place four cautionary towns in the hands of the Dutch as a pledge for the fulfilment of the treaty, and even to pay a subsidy to the allies for the continuance of the war against Philip. The allies, however, insisted that he should join with them in driving his grandson by force of arms from Spain, and on this article the negotiations were broken off.[1]

The English ministers in this negotiation showed themselves a little more moderate in their inclinations than on former occasions, but they yielded to the wish of the allies, and the war was for a third time needlessly and recklessly prolonged. It is always an impolitic thing to impose on a great power conditions so ignominious and dishonouring as to produce enduring resentment, and it would be difficult to exaggerate either the folly or the injustice of the course which on this occasion was pursued. England and Holland had absolutely no advantage to expect from the war, which Lewis was not prepared to concede. They prolonged it in order to impose on the Spaniards a sovereign they hated, and to deprive them of a sovereign they adored, in order to obtain the Spanish dominions for a prince who was now the heir to the Austrian throne, though a revival of the Empire of Charles V. would have disturbed the whole balance of European power. If a general peace was not signed, the war might have at least been narrowed into a duel between Austria and Spain, and in any case its object was almost unattainable. Spain is not, and never has been, one of those centralised countries in which the capture of the capital implies the subjugation of the nation. Stanhope, who knew it well, frankly declared 'that armies of 20,000 or 30,000 men might

[1] Compare *Memoires de Torcy*, i. 352-428. Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 525-527. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, ch. lxxxviii.

walk about that country till doomsday, that wherever they came the people would submit to Charles out of terror, and as soon as they were gone proclaim Philip V. again out of affection; that to conquer Spain required a great army, to keep it a greater.'[1] The fortunes of the war had more than once fluctuated violently, but no success of the allies had abated the hostility of the great body of the Spaniards. When Lewis withdrew his troops from Spain, the cause of Charles was for a brief period completely triumphant; but when, after the victory of Saragossa, Madrid was for the second time occupied by the allies in September 1710, it was found to be nearly deserted, almost the whole active population having retired with Philip to Valladolid. When it became evident that the conferences at Gertruydenberg would lead to no result, Lewis sent Vendome to command the Spanish forces. Charles was compelled to abandon Madrid for Toledo, where his troops added to their unpopularity by burning the Alcazar. He soon after left his army and retreated with 2,000 men to Barcelona. Bands of guerillas cut off communications on every side, and it was found almost impossible, in the face of the determined hostility of the population, to obtain either provisions or information. Stanhope, at the head of an English army of between 5,000 and 6,000 men, was surrounded at Brihuega, and after a desperate resistance the whole army was forced to surrender. Staremberg had marched at the head of the Austrian army to his assistance, but the battle of Villaviciosa compelled him to evacuate Aragon, and to retreat with great loss into Catalonia, while at the same time a French corps, commanded by Noailles, descending from Rousillon, invested and captured Gerona, so that, with the exception of the seaboard of Catalonia, the cause of Charles at the close of the year was ruined in Spain. In the meantime the cost of the war to England was rapidly increasing, while her interest in the result had greatly diminished. In 1702, when the war began, its expense for the year was estimated at about 3,700,000*l.* In 1706, when Lewis offered terms more than fulfilling every legitimate object of the war, it had risen to nearly 5,700,000*l.* In 1711 it was about 6,850,000*l.*[2] A heavy debt had been in-

[1] Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the History of Europe.*

[2] See Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, i., pp. 167-168.

curred. Nearly 800 corsairs had sailed, during the war, from Dunkirk to prey upon English and Dutch commerce,[1] and the former had been severely crippled by the heavy duties rendered necessary by the increasing expenses. Not less than 20,000 of the allied troops had been killed or wounded at Malplaquet. England, too, which of all the allied powers had the least direct interest in the war, bore by far the greatest share of the burden. Holland had obtained from England, in 1709, a treaty guaranteeing her, in return for a Dutch guarantee of the Protestant succession, the right of garrisoning a long line of barrier fortresses, including Nieuport, Furnes, Knocke, Ypres, Menin, Lille, Tournay, Condé, Valenciennes, Maubeuge, Charleroy, Namur, and other strong places, hereafter to be captured from France, while some strong places were to be incorporated absolutely in her dominions. The war, therefore, offered her advantages of the most vital nature, but she had invariably fallen short of the proportion of soldiers and sailors which at the beginning of the struggle she agreed to contribute; she refused even to prohibit her subjects from trading with France, and, with the exception of a duty of one per cent. for encouraging her own privateers, she had imposed no additional trade duty during the war. The Emperor had acquired immense territories in Italy and Germany, and he was fighting for the claims of an Austrian Prince to the Spanish throne; but he, too, as well as the Princes of the Empire, continually fell short of the stipulated quota. The minor powers in the alliance were chiefly subsidised by England, who had at one time no less than 244,000 men in her pay.[2]

Nor was this all. It was quite evident that the alliance must soon fall to pieces. From the first the mutual jealousies and the conflicting objects of the confederate powers had thrown obstacles in the way of the military operations, which it required

[1] Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 572.

[2] At the beginning of the war England had agreed to furnish only 40,000 men, the Emperor 90,000, and the States-General no less than 102,000, of whom 42,000 were to supply their garrisons, and 60,000 to act against the enemy. Of the ships five-eighths were to be supplied by England and three-eighths by the States. On the extent to which England exceeded and the other powers fell short of the stipulated proportion, see the Representation of the House of Commons, *Parl. Hist.* vi. 1095–1105.

all the genius and all the admirable patience and dexterity of Marlborough and Eugene to surmount. The absurd habit adopted by the Dutch, of sending deputies with their armies to control their generals, had again and again paralysed the allies. Marlborough thus lost his most favourable opportunity of crushing Boufflers at Zonhoven in 1702. He was prevented by the same cause from invading French Flanders in 1703, and from attacking Villars on the plain of Waterloo in 1705, though he expressed his confident belief that he could have gained a victory even more decisive than Blenheim; and Dutch jealousy was plausibly said to have been the chief reason why the war was never carried into the Spanish West Indies, where conquests would have been very easy and very lucrative to England. The conduct of the Emperor was no less open to censure. In the beginning of 1707 he had entered into separate and secret negotiations with the French; had concluded with them, without the consent of any of the allies except the Duke of Savoy, a treaty for the neutrality of Italy, and had thus enabled them to send reinforcements from Lombardy to Spain, which prepared the way for the great disaster of Almanza. In the course of the same year he insisted, contrary to the wishes of his allies, upon sending a large body of troops to conquer Naples for himself; and the want of his co-operation led to the calamitous failure of the siege of Toulon. There was hardly an expedition, hardly a negotiation, in which bickerings and divergent counsels did not appear. The Dutch and the English were animated by the bitterest spirit of commercial jealousy; and when Charles assumed the imperial crown, the alliance was at once placed in the most imminent danger. Portugal and Savoy formally declared that they would carry on the war no longer to unite the crown of Spain with that of Austria; and there was probably scarcely a statesman out of Germany who considered such a union in itself a good.[1]

[1] See, on the reasons for making peace, Swift's *Conduct of the Allies*, *The History of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne*, ascribed to Swift, the very forcible *Representation of the House of Commons*, drawn up by Sir Thomas Hanmer, Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, i., 166-176, Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the History of Europe*. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, though written from the Whig point of view, abundantly illustrates the selfish conduct of the allies. As early as Nov. 1710, Bolingbroke wrote to Drummond, 'Our trade sinks, and several channels of it, for want of the

Such was the state of affairs when the Tory ministry rose to power. It was evidently in the highest degree their party interest to negotiate a speedy peace. The war was originally a Whig war. It had been mainly supported by the Whig party. The great general who chiefly conducted it had been the pillar of the Whig ministry, and every victory he gained redounded to its credit. The principal allies of England during the struggle had, moreover, shown themselves actively hostile to the Tories. When the change of ministry was contemplated, the Emperor wrote to Anne to dissuade her from the step; and the Dutch Government directed their envoy to make a formal remonstrance to the same effect.[1] Besides this, it was a favourite doctrine of the Tory leaders that the large loans necessitated by the war had given an unnatural importance to the moneyed classes, who were the chief supporters of the Whigs, and who were regarded with extreme jealousy by the country gentry.[2] The mixture of party with foreign policy in times when a great national struggle is raging, is perhaps the most serious danger and evil attending parliamentary government; and it was shown in every part of the reign of Anne. But if the foregoing arguments are just, it will appear evident that in this case the party interest which led the Tory ministers to desire the immediate termination of the war was in complete accordance with the most momentous and pressing interests of the nation. It will appear almost equally evident that the essential article of the Peace of Utrecht, which was the recognition by England of Philip as the sovereign of Spain, was perfectly righteous and politic. The permanent maintenance of Charles on the

usual flux, become choked, and will in time be lost; whilst in the meanwhile the commerce of Holland extends itself and flourishes to a great degree. I can see no immediate benefit likely to accrue to this nation by the war, let it end how, and when it will, besides the general advantages common to all Europe of reducing the French power; whilst it is most apparent that the rest of the confederates have in their own hands already very great additions of power and dominion obtained by the war, and particularly the States.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, i. 26-27. See, too, i., pp. 54–55, 191–195, and also his able letter to the *Examiner* in 1710, which was answered by no less a person than the Chancellor Cowper. — *Somers' Tracts*, xiii. 71-75

[1] Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*. Bolingbroke's *Letters*, i. 9, iii. 76.

[2] See Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii., 74, 211. The same idea frequently occurs in Swift. In his letter to Sir W. Windham, Bolingbroke very frankly admitted that the peace was a supreme party interest.

Spanish throne was, probably, an impossibility. If it had been effected, so great an accession of power to the Empire would have been most dangerous to Europe. No other solution than the recognition of Philip was possible without a great prolongation of the war, and the dangers apprehended from that recognition might never arise, and could be at least partially averted. Philip might never become the heir to the French throne, and as long as the two kingdoms remained separate, there was no reason to believe that the relationship between their sovereigns would make Spain the vassal of France. The intense national jealousy of the Spanish character was a sufficient safeguard. More than half the wars which desolated Europe had been wars between sovereigns who were nearly related; and if it was true that Lewis exercised a great personal ascendancy over Philip, it was also true that Lewis was now so old a man, and his kingdom so reduced, that another war during his lifetime was almost impossible. If, on the other hand, the death of the infant Dauphin made Philip the heir to the French throne, a real danger would arise; but serious measures were taken by the Peace of Utrecht to mitigate it. In the first place, Philip made a solemn renunciation of his claims to the succession of France, and that renunciation was confirmed by the Spanish Cortes and registered by the French Parliaments. It was, it is true, only too probable that this renunciation would be disregarded if any great political end was to be attained. The examples of such a course were only too recent and glaring, and in this case an admirable pretext was already furnished. French lawyers had laid down the doctrine that such a renunciation, by the fundamental laws of France, would be null and invalid; that the next prince to the throne is necessarily the heir, by the right of birth; and that no political act of his own, or of the sovereign, could divest him of his title. In the earlier stages of the negotiation Torcy had maintained this doctrine in his correspondence with St. John, and if it was found convenient it would probably be revived. But even in case Philip became the heir to the French throne, it by no means followed that peace would be broken; for, as a mere matter of policy, it was probable that Philip would remain faithful to his engagement, and would content himself with one crown. An attempt to

unite the French and Spanish thrones would undoubtedly be met by another European coalition, and the offending sovereign would be weakened, not only by the great reluctance of the Spanish people to become subsidiary to a more powerful nation, but most probably also by the divisions of a disputed succession in France. In the face of these considerations, there was a fair prospect of the maintenance of peace; and even if events assumed their darkest aspect, the English, by the Peace of Utrecht, retained Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Minorca, which gave them the command of the Mediterranean, while the Spanish possessions in Italy and the Netherlands were added to the dominions of the Empire.

For these reasons the abandonment by the Tory ministry of the articles before insisted on, requiring Philip to give up the Spanish throne, and Lewis to employ his arms against him, appears perfectly justifiable, nor can we, I think, remembering the fate of the former negotiations, blame English statesmen very severely if, before attempting to negotiate a formal treaty, they entered into some separate explanation with the French. Here, however, the language of eulogy or apology must end, for the tortuous proceedings that terminated in the Peace of Utrecht form, beyond all question, one of the most shameful pages in English history. A desire for peace was hardly a stronger feeling with the Ministers than hatred and jealousy of the Dutch, and their first object was to outwit them by separate and clandestine negotiation; to obtain for England a monopoly of commercial privileges, and to obtain them, in a great degree, at the cost of the towns which would otherwise have been ceded for the Dutch barrier. As early as the autumn of 1710 a secret negotiation was carried on with the French, but for some time the aspect of the war was not very materially changed. For the first year after the new ministry came to power, Marlborough was still at the head of the army, though his position was a most painful one. The parliamentary vote of thanks to him was withheld; his opinion, even on military matters, was ostentatiously disregarded; his wife—who had, indeed, made herself intolerable to the Queen—was dismissed from her posts. Godolphin, who, of all his political friends, was most closely attached to him, was falsely and vindictively accused of having

left no less than 35,000,000*l.* of public money unaccounted for,[1] and in spite of the urgent protest of Marlborough, more than 5,000 men were withdrawn from the army to be employed in an enterprise from which St. John expected the most brilliant results. The Tories had long complained, with some reason, that the Whig Government carried on the war by land rather than by sea, and in the centre of Europe, where England had nothing to gain, rather than in distant quarters, where her colonial empire might be largely increased. St. John accordingly, anticipating one of the great enterprises of the elder Pitt, sent out[2] an expedition, consisting of twelve ships of war and fifty transports, for the conquest of Canada. The naval part was under the command of Sir Hoveden Walker, and the soldiers were under that of Brigadier Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham. It was, however, feebly conducted, and, having encountered some storms and losses at sea, it returned without result.

It may appear strange that Marlborough should have continued in command in spite of so many causes of irritation, but he was implored by his Whig friends to do so. Besides this, there is some reason to believe that his resolution of character was not altogether what it was; and his conduct in civil affairs never displayed the same decision as his conduct in the field. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he might, by a prompt intervention, supported by a threat of resignation, have retarded, if not prevented, the fall of Godolphin; and in the period immediately preceding the Peace of Utrecht, he displayed considerable weakness and hesitation. It is curious to observe that, of all public men, he showed the greatest sensitiveness to the libels of the press; and he complained to Harley and St. John, in terms of positive anguish, of the attacks to which he was subject.[3] His frequent negotiations with both Hanoverians and Jacobites rendered his position peculiarly perplexing. His love of money amounted to a disease, and made it difficult for him to sacrifice his official emoluments.

[1] Walpole very ably refuted this calumny. When Godolphin died in the following year his whole personal property, after his debts were paid, is said to have been scarcely sufficient to pay his funeral expenses. See a letter of the Duchess of Marlborough, Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cix.

[2] May 1711.

[3] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. c., cv.

He had tried without success at the time when the Whig ministry was falling to obtain from the Emperor the government of the Spanish Netherlands which on two previous occasions he had refused.[1] He had the natural desire of a great general to remain at the head of the army during the war, and of an adroit politician to preserve a position of much power at a time when the question of a disputed succession was impending. He was so incomparably the greatest English general that it seemed scarcely possible to displace him, and at one moment there were symptoms of reconciliation between himself and St. John. In September 1711 he succeeded, by a masterly movement, in breaking through the lines of Villars, and having captured Bouchain, the struggle seemed about to take a more decisive form. Quesnoy and Landrecies were the only strong places of the French barrier that were now interposed between the allies and a rich and open country extending to the very walls of Paris. The Emperor and the Dutch were straining all their powers for a new effort, and there can be little doubt that, under the guidance of Marlborough and Eugene, it would have been successful. The ministers, however, had by this time arrived at such a point in their secret negotiations that they looked forward to an immediate peace, and were anxious, if possible, to paralyse the operations of war. On September 27, 1711, two sets of preliminaries of peace were secretly signed. The first, the most important, and by far the most explicit, concerned England mainly or exclusively, were signed on the part of both England and France, and were kept carefully secret from the allies. By these preliminaries the title of Anne and her successors, as by law established, was recognised; the cession of Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Newfoundland, with a reservation of the right of fishing to the French, was granted or confirmed; the port and fortifications of Dunkirk were to be destroyed at the peace, France receiving an equivalent to be determined in the final treaty; a treaty of commerce with France was promised; the lucrative right of supplying the Spanish colonies in America with negroes was transferred from a French company to the English, and some places in America were assigned to the English for the refreshment and sale of the

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. xcvi.

negroes. The other set of preliminaries which were communicated to the Dutch and were signed only on the part of France, comprised the recognition of the title of the Queen and of the succession established by law, the article relating to Dunkirk and a promise of commercial advantages for England and Holland; they made no mention of the special advantages England secured for herself, but provided that measures should be taken to prevent the union of the crowns of France and Spain; that barriers, the nature and extent of which were as yet undefined, should be formed for the Dutch and for the Empire; and, by a separate article, that the places taken from the Duke of Savoy should be restored, and his power in Italy aggrandised. These articles were communicated by the English to the allies, who were summoned to a conference for the negotiation of a definite peace.

The difficulties of the ministers were very great. The Dutch, though they at length consented to join the proposed conference at Utrecht, expressed strong dissatisfaction with the preliminaries of which they had been apprised. The Emperor was still more emphatic, and he only consented to take part in the proceedings on condition that the preliminaries should be regarded as mere propositions, without any binding force. The Elector of Hanover, whose judgment had naturally a special weight with English politicians, was prominent on the same side; and although the ministers could count on a large majority in the Commons, a majority in the House of Lords, supported by Marlborough himself, voted that no peace could be safe or honourable which left Spain and the Indies to a Bourbon prince. Public opinion received a severe shock when, at the close of the year, the greatest of England's generals was removed ignominiously from the command of the army, and was replaced by the Duke of Ormond, a strong Tory, but a man of no military ability. The conference, however, met at Utrecht at the close of January 1711–12, and early in the next month the French made their propositions for a peace. Lewis offered to recognise the Queen of England and the succession established by law, but only on the signature of peace; to destroy the fortifications of Dunkirk after the peace, on condition of receiving a satisfactory equivalent; to cede to Eng-

land St. Christopher, Hudson's Bay, and Newfoundland, reserving, however, the fort of Placentia and the right of fishing around Newfoundland, and receiving again the whole of Acadia; and he also undertook to make a treaty of commerce with England, based on the principle of reciprocity. When, however, the question of the Dutch barrier arose, the French propositions showed the enormous change which had passed over the pretensions of Lewis since the conferences of Gertruydenberg. He now demanded that the sovereignty of the Spanish Netherlands should be granted to his ally the Elector of Bavaria; and, although he recognised the right of the Dutch to garrison the frontier towns, he prescribed limits for their barrier wholly different from those which had been guaranteed by England in the treaty of 1709, and recognised by France in the conferences of 1710. He demanded the surrender of both Lille and Tournay as an equivalent for the destruction of the harbour of Dunkirk. Of the cession of Valenciennes there was no longer any question. He offered, it is true, to cede Furnes, Knocke, Ypres, and Menin, but only in exchange for Aire, St. Venant, Bethune, and Douay. These demands were made, though not a single success in Flanders had improved the position of the French since 1709, while the immense concession the allies were preparing to make in leaving Philip undisturbed on the Spanish throne entitled them to demand that in other respects at least the conditions accepted in that year should be rigidly exacted. The arrogance, as it was deemed, of the French King excited not only indignation, but astonishment; but those who blamed it did not know the secret stipulations by which England was now bound to France. They did not know that the English ministers were on far more confidential terms with the enemy than with their allies; that St. John had informed the French negotiator that, though they could not avoid demanding a barrier for the Dutch, they desired it to be neither very extended nor very strong; that he had specially urged the French to stand firm against Holland, in order to resist any attempt she might make to obtain a share of the advantages conceded to England.[1] Under such circumstances, the position of France in the nego-

[1] Torcy's *Memoirs*.

tiations was not that of an isolated and defeated Power. She had a weighty ally at the Council-board—an ally all the more valuable because her position was unavowed; because her statesmen had entered upon a course in which failure or even exposure might lead to impeachment. The other French demands were in the same key. Lewis consented, indeed, in the name of his grandson, to the abandonment of the Spanish dominions in Italy, which were already in the hands of the allies; but he demanded that the frontiers between France and Germany, between France and the territory of the Duke of Savoy, and between Portugal and Spain, should be re-established as they were before the war. He consented to give guarantees against the possible union of the crowns of France and Spain, and to recognise those titles in Germany which he had hitherto refused to acknowledge; but he demanded in return that Philip should retain the thrones of Spain and of the Indies, and that the Electors of Cologne and Bavaria should be fully re-established in the territory and the position from which they had been driven by the war.

It is not surprising that such demands, made after a long succession of crushing defeats, by a Power which less than three years before would have gladly purchased peace by a complete abandonment of the cause of Philip, by the cession of all or almost all the strong places on the Dutch frontier, and by the restoration of Strasburg to the Emperor, should have been branded by the House of Lords as scandalous, frivolous, and dishonouring to the Queen and to the allies. The English ministers, however, were not discouraged, and they advanced fearlessly in the path which they had chosen. The course of duty before them at this time was very clear. The terms or propositions of peace should have been fully, frankly, and unreservedly laid before the plenipotentiaries assembled at Utrecht. As long as no conclusion was arrived at, military operations should have been strenuously pursued, but if after mature deliberation England desired to make peace on terms which were unacceptable to the allies, she had a perfect right to withdraw formally from the alliance. Harley and St. John, however, though widely different in most respects, agreed in preferring tortuous to open methods, and they at this time

carried on the foreign policy of the Government rather in the manner of conspirators than of statesmen. They plunged deeper and deeper into separate clandestine negotiations; and they allowed these negotiations to interfere fatally with military operations. The allied army in Flanders in the spring of 1712 considerably outnumbered that of Villars which was opposed to it, and although the English contingent was feebly commanded the presence of Eugene gave great promise of success. The opposing armies were in close proximity, and there was every reason to look forward to brilliant results, when Ormond received peremptory orders from St. John to engage in no siege and to hazard no battle till further instructions, and to keep this order strictly secret from the general with whom he was co-operating. A postscript was added, in which the seriousness of the matter contrasted strangely with the levity of the form. 'I had almost forgot to tell your Grace that communication is made of this order to the Court of France, so that if the Marshal de Villars takes, in any private way, notice of it to you, your Grace will answer accordingly.'[1] Twelve days later another letter directed Ormond to take the first step by sending a messenger to Villars,[2] and a secret correspondence was thus opened between the English general and the enemy who was opposed to him in the field. The suspicions of Eugene were at last aroused. He perceived an opportunity of compelling the enemy either to fight a battle at great disadvantage, or else to repass the Somme, and he at once prepared a general attack. The English general was overwhelmed with confusion: he tried by excuses that were palpably futile to evade the request, and he finally begged a postponement. The treachery now could no longer be concealed. Eugene insisted on besieging Quesnoy. Ormond could find no excuse, and yielded. The siege was formally begun when Ormond announced to the Austrian commander and to the Dutch that England had signed a suspension of arms for two months, and that the British troops and the auxiliaries who were subsidised by Great Britain were about, in the face of the enemy, to retire from the confederate army.

These transactions formed afterwards one of the most formidable of the articles of impeachment against Bolingbroke,

[1] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii. 321 (May 10). [2] Ibid. p. 344.

and they admit of but little palliation. The scene when the suspension of arms was announced to the army was a very memorable one. The Austrian and Dutch generals protested in vain. The subsidised allies loudly declared that they would be no parties to an act of such aggravated treachery. Their pay was considerably in arrear, and with a rare refinement of meanness it was threatened that their arrears would not be paid unless they withdrew, but the threat with the great majority was unavailing. Among the British troops the sentiment was but little different. When the withdrawal was announced at the head of each regiment a general hiss and murmur ran through the ranks. In order to prevent the spread of disaffection, strict orders were given that there should be no communication between the troops who were to retire and those who were to remain; but yet, in the words of a contemporary, the British camp resounded 'with curses against the Duke of Ormond as a stupid tool and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers were so overwhelmed with vexation that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground for very shame with downcast eyes, and for several days shrank from the sight even of their fellow soldiers. . . . . Some left their colours, to serve among the allies, and others afterwards withdrew, and whenever they recollected the Duke of Marlborough and the late glorious times their eyes filled with tears.'[1] At length, on the 12th of July, the British troops, numbering 12,000 men, and accompanied only by four squadrons and one battalion of the Holstein auxiliaries, and by a regiment of dragoons from the contingent of Liége, marched in dejected silence from the confederate camp. The Dutch governors of Bouchain, Douay, and Tournay refused to open their gates, and the English in reprisal seized upon Ghent and Bruges. One of the terms of the agreement with France was that a British garrison should at once occupy Dunkirk, but the French, alleging that the greater part of the auxiliaries in the pay of England still remained with the confederate army, declared that the treaty was broken, and refused to open the gates, nor was it till after considerable negotiations and urgent appeals that Lewis consented, more as a matter of favour than of right, to admit the English into Dunkirk.

[1] Cunningham.

This defection left a deep stain on the honour of England, and, as might have been expected, it gave a complete turn to the war. Quesnoy, it is true, surrendered on the very day of the retreat of Ormond, and Landrecies was besieged, but the tide of fortune speedily receded. Villars, strengthened by the garrisons of towns which the English armistice relieved, attacked and defeated one section of the weakened army of Eugene at Denain. Douay was invested by the French and compelled to surrender. Quesnoy was retaken, and the campaign closed with the recapture of Bouchain, the last great conquest of Marlborough. Had not the allies in the pay of England for the most part refused to abandon the army of Eugene, it is not improbable that it would have been totally destroyed. Immediately after the battle of Denain the French minister, Torcy, wrote in characteristic terms to St. John to communicate to him the disaster which had befallen the allies of England. 'The King of France,' he said, 'is persuaded that the advantage which his troops have obtained will give the Queen so much the more pleasure, as it may be an aid to overcome the obstinacy of the enemies to peace.'[1] Three months later we find Ormond informing Bolingbroke of the intention of the Dutch to attempt the surprise of Nieuport or Furnes. 'If it be thought more for Her Majesty's service to prevent it,' he added, 'I am humbly of opinion some means should be found to give advice of it to Marshal Villars.'[2]

While these events were taking place, the Government at home had been pressing on the peace by measures of almost unparalleled violence. Supported by a large majority in the House of Commons it resolved to silence or crush all opposition. The first and most conspicuous victim was Marlborough. It was alleged, and alleged with truth, that while commanding in the Netherlands he had during several years received an annual present of about 6,000*l.* from the contractor who supplied his army with bread, and also that he had appropriated two-and-a-half per cent. of the money which had been voted by Parliament for paying the subsidised troops, and on these grounds he was accused of peculation. The answer, however, in ordinary times would have been accepted as conclusive. It was shown that the former sum

[1] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii. 443.

[2] Report of the Secret Committee.

was a perquisite always granted to the commander in the Netherlands and employed by him for obtaining that secret intelligence which is absolutely essential to a general, and which was never more complete than under Marlborough, and that the deduction from the subsidies was expressly authorised by the foreign powers who were subsidised, and by a royal warrant which granted it to the commander-in-chief 'for extraordinary contingent expenses.' Whatever irregularity there might be in providing by these means a supply of secret-service money, it was of old standing; there was no reason whatever to believe that the fund was misappropriated, though from its very nature it could not be accounted for in detail, and it was proved that the expenditure of secret-service money in the campaigns of Marlborough was considerably smaller than it had been in the incomparably less successful campaigns of William.[1] Prince Eugene afterwards very candidly declared that he had himself given for intelligence three times as much as Marlborough was charged with on that head.[2] The object of the dominant party, however, was at all costs to discredit Marlborough. He was dismissed from all his employments, pronounced guilty by a party vote of the House of Commons, and exposed to a storm of mendacious obloquy. When Eugene came over to England in order to use his influence against the peace in the January of 1711–12, he perceived with no little generous indignation that every effort was made to extol his military talents at the expense of the great English commander. Marlborough was assailed as he drove through the streets with cries of 'Stop thief!' He was grossly insulted in the House of Lords. He was accused of the most atrocious plots against the Queen and against the State. The scurrilous pens of Mrs. Manley and of a host of other libellers were employed against him. Ballads describing him as the basest of men were sung publicly in the highways. The funds which the Queen had hitherto provided for the construction of Blenheim were stopped, and the tide of calumny and vituperation ran so strongly that he thought it advisable to abandon the country, and accordingly proceeded in November 1712 almost alone to Flanders, and soon after to Germany. He

[1] Coxe.

[2] W. Watson to Jas. Dawson, June 22, 1711.—*MSS. Dublin State Paper Office.*

was received in both countries with a respect and an enthusiasm that contrasted strangely with his treatment at home, and he at the same time invested 50,000*l.* in Holland, in case the state of home politics should exclude him for ever from his country.

English history contains no more striking instance of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling. Beyond comparison the greatest of English generals, Marlborough had raised his country to a height of military glory such as it had never attained since the days of Poitiers and of Agincourt, and his victories appeared all the more dazzling after the ignominious reigns of the two last Stuarts, and after the many failures that chequered the enterprises of William. His military genius, though once bitterly decried by party malignity,[1] will now be universally acknowledged, and it was sufficient to place him among the greatest captains who have ever lived. 'Hardly any other modern general combined to an equal degree the three great attributes of daring, caution, and sagacity, or conducted military enterprises of equal magnitude and duration without losing a single battle or failing in a single siege. He was one of the very few commanders who appear to have shown equal skill in directing a campaign, in winning a battle, and in improving a victory.' It cannot, indeed, be said of him, as it may be said of Frederick the Great, that he was at the head of a small Power, with almost all Europe in arms against it, and that nearly every victory he won was snatched from an army enormously outnumbering his own. At Blenheim and Oudenarde the French exceeded by a few thousands the armies of the allies. At Ramillies the army of Marlborough was slightly superior. At Malplaquet the opposing forces were almost equal. Nor did the circumstances of Marlborough admit of a military career of the same brilliancy, variety, and magnitude of enterprise as that of Napoleon. But both Frederick and Napoleon experienced crushing disasters, and both of them had some advantages which Marlborough did

[1] Thus in the *History of the four last years of Queen Anne*, Swift—if he be indeed the author of this work—says: 'I will say nothing of his military accomplishments, which the opposite reports of his friends and enemies among the soldiers have rendered problematical' (p. 14). Wellington as is well known, was depreciated in the same manner in Whig circles. Thus Byron—

> Oh, bloody and most bootless Waterloo!
> Which proves how fools may have their fortune too,
> Won half by blunder, half by treachery.
>
> *The Age of Bronze.*

not possess. Frederick was the absolute ruler of a State which had for many years been governed exclusively on the military principle, in which the first and almost the sole object of the Government had been to train and discipline the largest and most perfect army the nation could support. Napoleon was the absolute ruler of the foremost military Power on the Continent at a time when the enthusiasm of a great revolution had given it an unparalleled energy, when the destruction of the old hierarchy of rank and the opening of all posts to talent had brought an extraordinary amount of ability to the forefront, and when the military administrations of surrounding nations were singularly decrepit and corrupt. Marlborough, on the other hand, commanded armies consisting in a great degree of confederates and mercenaries of many different nationalities, and under many different rulers. He was thwarted at every step by political obstacles, and by the much graver obstacles arising from divided command and personal or national jealousies; he contended against the first military nation of the Continent, at a time when its military organisation had attained the highest perfection, and when a long succession of brilliant wars had given it a school of officers of consummate skill.

But great as were his military gifts, they would have been insufficient had they not been allied with other qualities well fitted to win the admiration of men. Adam Smith has said, with scarcely an exaggeration, that 'it is a characteristic almost peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid successes as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarcely into a single rash word or expression.'[1] Nothing in his career is more admirable than the unwearied patience, the inimitable skill, the courtesy, the tact, the self-command with which he employed himself during many years in reconciling the incessant differences, overcoming the incessant opposition, and soothing the incessant jealousies of those with whom he was compelled to co-operate. His private correspondence abundantly shows how gross was the provocation he endured, how keenly he felt it, how nobly he bore it. As a negotiator he ranks with the most skilful

[1] *Moral Philosophy.*

diplomatists of his age, and it was no doubt his great tact in managing men that induced his old rival Bolingbroke, in one of his latest writings, to describe him as not only the greatest general, but also 'the greatest minister our country or any other has produced.'[1] Chesterfield, while absurdly depreciating his intellect, admitted that 'his manner was irresistible,' and he added that, of all men he had ever known, Marlborough 'possessed the graces in the highest degree.'[2] Nor was his character without its softer side. Though he cannot, I think, be acquitted of a desire to prolong war in the interests of his personal or political ambition, it is at least true that no general ever studied more, by admirable discipline and by uniform humanity, to mitigate its horrors. Very few friendships among great political or military leaders have been as constant or as unclouded by any shade of jealousy as the friendship between Marlborough and Godolphin, and between Marlborough and Eugene. His conjugal fidelity, in a time of great laxity and under temptations and provocations of no common order, was beyond reproach. His attachment to the Church of England was at one time the great obstacle to his advancement. It appears never to have wavered through all the vicissitudes of his life; and no one who reads his most private letters with candour can fail to perceive that a certain vein of genuine piety ran through his nature, however inconsistent it may appear with some portions of his career.

Yet it may be questioned whether, even in the zenith of his fame, he was really popular. He had grave vices, and they were precisely of that kind which is most fatal to public men. His extreme rapacity in acquiring and his extreme avarice in hoarding money contrasted forcibly with the lavish generosity of Ormond, and alone gave weight to the charges of peculation that were brought against him. It is true that this, like all his passions, was under control. Torcy soon found that it was useless to attempt to bribe him, and he declined, as we have seen, with little hesitation the enormously lucrative post of Governor of the Austrian Netherlands, when he found that the appointment aroused the strong and dangerous hostility of the Dutch.

[1] *Letters on the Study of History.* [2] *Letters to his Son*, Nov. 18, 1748.

In these cases his keen and far-seeing judgment perceived clearly his true interest, and he had sufficient resolution to follow it. Yet still, like many men who have risen from great poverty to great wealth, avarice was the passion of his life, and the rapacity both of himself and of his wife was insatiable. Besides immense grants for Blenheim, and marriage portions given by the Queen to their daughters, they at one time received between them an annual income of public money of more than 64,000*l.*[1]

Nor can he be acquitted of very gross and aggravated treachery to those he served. It is, indeed, not easy to form a fair estimate in this respect of the conduct of public men at the period of the Revolution. Historians rarely make sufficient allowance for the degree in which the judgments and dispositions even of the best men are coloured by the moral tone of the age, society, or profession in which they live, or for the temptations of men of great genius and of natural ambition in times when no highly scrupulous man could possibly succeed in public life. Marlborough struggled into greatness from a very humble position, in one of the most profligate periods of English politics, and he lived through a long period when the ultimate succession of the crown was very doubtful. A very large proportion of the leading statesmen during this long season of suspense made such overtures to the deposed dynasty as would at least secure them from absolute ruin in the event of a change; and their conduct is surely susceptible of much palliation. The apparent interests and the apparent wishes of the nation hung so evenly and oscillated so frequently that strong convictions were rare, and even good men might often be in doubt. But the obligations of Churchill to James were of no common order, and his treachery was of no common dye. He had been raised by the special favour of his sovereign from the position of a page to the peerage, to great wealth, to high command in the army. He had been trusted by him with the most absolute trust. He not only abandoned him in the crisis of his fate, with circumstances of the most deliberate and aggravated treachery, but also employed his influence over the daughter of his benefactor to induce her to fly from her father, and to array herself with his

[1] Lord Stanhope's *History of England*, i. 20. Swift's 'Contrast between Roman Gratitude and British Ingratitude,' in the *Examiner*, No. 16.

enemies. Such conduct, if it had indeed been dictated, as he alleged, solely by a regard for the interests of Protestantism, would have been certainly, in the words of Hume, 'a signal sacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life;' and it 'required ever after the most upright, disinterested, and public-spirited behaviour, to render it justifiable.' How little the later career of Marlborough fulfilled this condition is well known. When we find that, having been loaded under the new Government with titles, honours, and wealth, having been placed in the inner council and entrusted with the most important State secrets, he was one of the first Englishmen to enter into negotiations with St. Germain's; that he purchased his pardon from James by betraying important military secrets to the enemies of his country, and that during a great part of his subsequent career, while holding office under the Government, he was secretly negotiating with the Pretender, it is difficult not to place the worst construction upon his public life. It is probable, indeed, that his negotiations with the Jacobites were never sincere, that he had no real desire for a restoration, and that his guiding motive was much less ambition than a desire to secure what he possessed; but these considerations only slightly palliate his conduct. At the period of his downfall his later acts of treason were for the most part unknown, but his conduct towards James weighed heavily upon his reputation, and his intercourse with the Pretender, though not proved, was at least suspected by many. Neither Hanoverians nor Jacobites trusted him, neither Whigs nor Tories could regard him without reserve as their own.

And with this feeling of distrust there was mingled a strong element of fear. In the latter years of Queen Anne the shadow of Cromwell fell darkly across the path of Marlborough. To those who prefer the violent methods of a reforming despotism to the slow process of parliamentary amelioration, to those who despise the wisdom of following public opinion and respecting the prejudices and the associations of a nation, there can be no better lesson than is furnished by the history of Cromwell. Of his high and commanding abilities it is not here necessary to speak, nor yet of the traits of magnanimity that may, no doubt, be found in his character. Everything that great

genius and the most passionate sympathy could do to magnify these has in this century been done, and a long period of unqualified depreciation has been followed by a reaction of extravagant eulogy. But the more the qualities of the man are exalted the more significant are the lessons of his life. Despising the national sentiment of loyalty, he and his party dethroned and beheaded the King. Despising the ecclesiastical sentiment, they destroyed the Church. Despising the deep reverence for the constitution, they subverted the Parliament. Despising the oldest and most cherished customs of the people, they sought to mould the whole social life of England in the die of an austere Puritanism. They seemed for a time to have succeeded, but the result soon appeared. Republican equality was followed by the period of most obsequious, servile loyalty England has ever known. The age when every amusement was denounced as a crime was followed by the age when all virtue was treated as hypocrisy, and when the sense of shame seemed to have almost vanished from the land. The prostration of the Church was followed, with the full approbation of the bulk of the nation, by the bitter, prolonged persecution of Dissenters. The hated memory of the Commonwealth was for more than a century appealed to by every statesman who desired to prevent reform or discredit liberty, and the name of Cromwell gathered around it an intensity of hatred approached by no other in the history of England. This was the single sentiment common in all its vehemence to the Episcopalians of England, the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Catholics of Ireland, and it had more than once considerable political effects. The profound horror of military despotism, which is one of the strongest and most salutary of English sentiments, has been, perhaps, the most valuable legacy of the Commonwealth. In Marlborough, for the first time since the Restoration, men saw a possible Cromwell, and they looked forward with alarm to the death of the Queen as a period peculiarly propitious to military usurpation. Bolingbroke never represented more happily the feelings of the people than in the well-known scene at the first representation of the 'Cato' of Addison. Written by a great Whig writer, the play was intended to advocate Whig sentiments; but when the Whig

audience had made the theatre ring with applause at every speech on the evil of despotism and arbitrary principles, the Tory leader availed himself of the pause between the acts to summon the chief actor, to present him with a purse of money, and to thank him publicly for having defended the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual military dictator.

These considerations help to explain the completeness of the downfall of Marlborough. His secretary Cardonnel was at the same time expelled from the House of Commons, on the charge of having received a gratuity from some bread contractors; and Walpole, who was rapidly rising to a foremost place in the Whig ranks, was on a very similar charge not only expelled, but sent to the Tower. The opposition of the Upper House was met by the simultaneous creation of twelve peers—one of them being a brother to Mrs. Masham—and the friends of Marlborough in the Lords were also seriously weakened by the death of Godolphin in September 1712. The language adopted towards the Dutch was that of undisguised and implacable hostility. The treaty of 1709, by which England had guaranteed Holland a strong barrier, while Holland guaranteed the Protestant succession in England, and undertook, in time of danger, to support it by arms, was brought before the House of Commons, and severely censured as too favourable to the Dutch; and Lord Townshend, who negotiated it, was voted an enemy to his country. Strong resolutions were carried, censuring the conduct of Holland, in falling below the stipulated proportion of troops and sailors, and a powerful representation, which was in fact an indictment against the allies, was drawn up. The States issued a memorial in reply, but it was voted by the House of Commons 'a false, scandalous, and malicious libel,' and orders were given that those who had printed and published it in England should be taken into custody. In the same spirit two protests of peers against the proceedings of the ministers were expunged from the records of the House of Lords. Fleetwood, the bishop of St. Asaph's, having published some sermons, preached many years before, with a very moderate preface, repudiating the doctrines of passive obedience, deploring the ingratitude shown to William, and complaining that the spirit of discord had entered into the

councils and impaired the glory of England, this preface, by order of the House of Commons, was burnt by the hangman.[1] Libels of the most virulent kind, some of them from the pen of Swift, were showered upon the allies and upon the Whigs, while the hand of power was perpetually raised against the writings of the Opposition. Prosecutions of this kind had for some time been very numerous, and the Stamp Act of 1712, imposing a stamp of a halfpenny on every sheet, gave a severe blow to the rising activity of the press.

I do not propose to follow in detail the negotiations which terminated in the Peace of Utrecht. Their story has been often told with a fullness that leaves nothing to be desired, and it will be sufficient to relate the general issue. The desertion of England and the disasters of the last campaign had broken the courage of the allies, and, with the exception of the Emperor, all the Powers consented to make separate treaties of peace with France on terms which were, in a very great measure, determined by English influence. On March 31, 1713, these several treaties were signed, and soon after, that between England and Spain. As far as England was concerned, the peace left little to be desired. The possession or restoration of Gibraltar, Minorca, Hudson's Bay, Acadia or Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the French part of St. Christopher, and the immense accession of guilty wealth acquired through the Assiento treaty, by which England obtained the monopoly of the slave-trade to the Spanish colonies, did much to compensate for the great pecuniary sacrifices of the war; while some slight additional security was given to the nation by the French recognition of the Act of Settlement, by the expulsion of the Pretender from the French dominions, and, above all, by the destruction of the forts and harbour of Dunkirk. The Duke of Savoy obtained the restoration of the territory he had lost in Savoy and in Nice, a slight rectification of his frontier, and also the island of Sicily; and it was provided that, in the event of the failure of the line of Philip, the Spanish throne should descend to the House of Savoy. The treaty with Portugal was confined to some not very important articles relating to her frontier in America; but Prussia obtained from France for the first time

[1] It was republished in the *Spectator*, No. 384.

the recognition of the royal title of her sovereign, and of his right to the sovereignty of Neuchatel, which, on the death of the Duchess of Nemours in 1707, had been recognised by the States of Neuchatel, but violently repudiated by the French King. Prussia at the same time renounced in favour of France all claims to the principality of Orange, receiving Upper Guelderland instead. Holland obtained some advantages, but they were so much less than those which she had claimed, and than those she had been promised, and so insufficient to compensate her for the long struggle she had undergone, that she may be justly regarded as one of the chief sufferers by the peace. No new fortresses were incorporated in her territory, but the Spanish Netherlands, as they had been possessed by Charles II., were to be ceded to the House of Austria, the Dutch maintaining the right of garrisoning the strong places so as to form a barrier against France. By this means the Dutch and Austrian power would combine to shelter Holland from French invasion; but the Dutch occupation of Austrian towns could hardly fail to produce discord between Austria and the Netherlands. Holland was compelled to restore Lille, Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant to France; Quesnoy, which was strategically of great importance, and which had been lost through the treacherous desertion of England, remained in French hands; Tournay would have almost certainly been surrendered had not St. John feared the indignation of English public opinion;[1] and although Holland procured a treaty of commerce with France, her statesmen complained bitterly that she was excluded from all share in the Assiento contract, and in the advantages which England obtained by her new stations in the Mediterranean. As the Emperor refused to accede to the Peace of Utrecht, the Spanish Netherlands were placed in Dutch hands till peace was finally concluded, and in this quarter, therefore, the war was at an end. The Spanish dominions in Italy, with the exception of Sicily and of a small portion of the Milanese, which passed to the Duke of Savoy, were ceded to the Emperor, and a military convention, signed just before the Peace of Utrecht, established the neutrality of Italy, while,

[1] See Bolingbroke's correspondence on the subject with Torcy.

by another similar convention, guaranteed by both England and France, the Emperor agreed to withdraw his troops from Catalonia and from the islands of Majorca and Ivica. He still refused to abandon his claims to the whole Spanish dominions, or to treat with Philip; and the German frontier on the side of France was only determined after another campaign in which Villars captured in a few weeks both Landau and Fribourg. The Emperor then came to terms, and peace was signed, at Rastadt, on March 6 (N.S.), and confirmed by the treaty of Baden, in September, 1714. By this peace France restored to the Empire Brisach, Fribourg, and Kehl; engaged to destroy the fortresses she had built since the peace of Ryswick along the Rhine, and recognised the new electoral dignity in the House of Hanover, while the Emperor, on his side, consented to the re-establishment of the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne in the territory and dignities they had lost by the war. Alsace continued French, and Landau was for a time added to the French dominions. The Emperor refused to include the Spanish King in the treaty, but without any formal peace active hostilities ceased, and though the ambition of the House of Hapsburg was baffled, it was hoped that the great end of the allies was accomplished by the solemn and reiterated renunciation by Philip of all claim to the French throne.

France, which had been reduced to an almost hopeless condition, emerged from the struggle much weakened for a time by the exhaustion of the war, but scarcely injured by the peace. With the exception of a very few fortresses, her European territory was intact; her military prestige was in some degree restored by the victory of Denain and by the last campaign of Villars on the Rhine; and her ascendancy in Europe, which had proved a source of many dangers, was not permanently impaired. Spain had undergone the dismemberment she so greatly feared; but the severance of distant, ill-governed, and discontented provinces did not seriously diminish her strength. She retained the sovereign of her choice. She preserved the colonial possessions which were the great source of her wealth, and she was in some degree reinvigorated by the infusion of a foreign element into her government. Alone among the Spaniards the Catalans had real reason to regret the peace.

They had clung to the cause of Charles with a desperate fidelity, and the Peace of Utrecht rang the death-knell of provincial liberties to which they were passionately attached. From the beginning of 1705 they had been the steady and faithful allies of England; they had again and again done eminent service in her cause; they had again and again received from her ministers and generals the most solemn assurances that they would never be abandoned. When England first opened a separate negotiation for peace she might easily have secured the Catalonian liberties by making their recognition an indispensable preliminary of peace; but, instead of this, the English ministers began by recognising the title of Philip, and contented themselves with a simple prayer that a general amnesty might be granted. When the convention was signed for the evacuation of Catalonia by the Imperial troops, the question of the provincial liberties was referred to the definite peace, the Queen and the French King promising at that time to interpose their good offices to secure them. The Emperor, who was bound to the Catalans by the strongest ties of gratitude and honour, could have easily obtained a guarantee of their fueros at the price of an acknowledgment of the title of Philip; but he was too proud and too selfish for such a sacrifice. The English, it is true, repeatedly urged the Spanish King to guarantee these privileges, and their ambassador, Lord Lexington, represented 'that the Queen thought herself obliged, by the strongest ties, those of conscience and honour,' to insist upon this point; but these were mere representations, supported by no action, and were therefore peremptorily refused. The English peace with Spain contained a clause granting the Catalans a general armistice, and also a promise that they should be placed in the same position as the Castilians, which gave them the right of holding employments and carrying on a direct trade with the West Indies, but it made no mention of their provincial privileges. The Peace of Rastadt was equally silent, for the dignity of the Emperor would not suffer him to enter into any negotiations with Philip. The unhappy people, abandoned by those whom they had so faithfully served, refused to accept the position offered them by treaty, and, much to the indignation of the English Government, they still

continued in arms, struggling with a desperate courage against overwhelming odds. The King of Spain then called upon the Queen, as a guarantee of the treaty of evacuation, 'to order a squadron of her ships to reduce his subjects to their obedience, and thereby complete the tranquillity of Spain and of the Mediterranean commerce.' A fleet was actually despatched, which would probably have been employed against Barcelona, but for an urgent address of the House of Lords,[1] and the whole moral weight of England was thrown into the scale against the insurgents. The conduct of the French was more decided. Though the French King had engaged himself with the Queen by the treaty of evacuation to use his good offices in the most effectual manner in favour of the Catalan liberties, he now sent an army to hasten the capture of Barcelona. The blockade of that noble city lasted for more than a year. The insurgents hung up over the high altar the Queen's solemn declaration to protect them. They continued the hopeless struggle till 14,000 bombs had been thrown into the city; till a great part of it had been reduced to ashes; till seven breaches had been made; till 10,000 of the besieging army had been killed or wounded; and till famine had been added to the horrors of war. At last, on September 11, 1714, Barcelona was taken by storm. A frightful massacre took place in the streets. Many of the inhabitants were afterwards imprisoned or transported, and the old privileges of Catalonia were finally abolished.[2]

Such was the last scene of this disastrous war, and such were the leading articles of the treaties by which the balance and disposition of power in Europe were for a long period determined. France and Austria, whose competition for the dominions of Charles II. was the real cause of the war, would both have been more powerful had they never drawn the sword, but simply accepted the treaty of partition. As far as England was concerned, the peace was less blameable than the means by which it was obtained, and the foreign policy of the Tory party was hardly more deflected by dishonourable motives than

[1] April 3, 1714.

[2] See the Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons on the Peace of Utrecht. *Mémoires de Berwick, tome* ii. Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iii. 365; Somers' *Tracts*, xiii. 636–638; Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, xix. 32–40.

that of their adversaries. Those, indeed, who can look undazzled through the blaze of military glory that illuminates the reign of Anne will find very little in English public life during that period deserving of respect. Party motives on both sides were supreme. They led one party to prolong a war, which was once unquestionably righteous, beyond all just and reasonable limits. They led the other party to make a peace which was desirable and almost necessary, in such a manner that it left a deep and lasting stain on the honour of the nation. To those who care to note the landmarks of moral history which occasionally appear amid the vicissitudes of politics, it may not be uninteresting to observe that among the few parts of the Peace of Utrecht which appear to have given unqualified and unanimous satisfaction at home was the Assiento contract, which made England the great slave-trader of the world. The last prelate who took a leading part in English politics affixed his signature to the treaty. A *Te Deum*, composed by Handel, was sung in thanksgiving in the churches. Theological passions had been recently more vehemently aroused, and theological controversies had for some years acquired a wider and more absorbing interest in England than in any period since the Commonwealth; but it does not yet appear to have occurred to any class that a national policy which made it its main object to encourage the kidnapping of tens of thousands of negroes, and their consignment to the most miserable slavery, might be at least as inconsistent with the spirit of the Christian religion as either the establishment of Presbyterianism or the toleration of prelacy in Scotland.

While the peace was still in process of negotiation, the two leaders of the Government were raised to the peerage, but with unequal honours; and the fact that St. John was only made Viscount Bolingbroke, while Harley became Earl of Oxford, greatly strengthened the jealousy which had arisen between them. The position of the Government, however, on the conclusion of the peace, was very strong, for it was warmly supported by the Queen and by the two most powerful classes in England. The Church was gratified by the measures against the Dissenters. The country gentry had obtained in 1711 a Bill which they believed of the highest value to their interests. In 1703,

before the ascendancy of the Tories in the ministry had been overthrown, a Bill was carried through the House of Commons, providing that no person who did not possess sufficient real estates should be chosen member of that House; but the measure was thrown out by the Whig majority in the Lords. The Government now, however, succeeded in carrying through both Houses a measure providing that all Members of Parliament, except the eldest sons of peers and those who sat for Universities or for Scotch constituencies, must possess landed property, the borough members to the extent of 300*l.*, the county members to the extent of 600*l.* a-year. In times of peace, when no abnormal agency was disturbing the natural disposition of parties, it was believed that the ascendancy of the Tories must be indisputable; the desire for peace arising from many causes had for some time been growing in the country, and there was a general and well-founded conviction that the war had been needlessly prolonged through party motives; that no results could be hoped for at all equivalent to the sacrifices that were demanded; and that the allies had thrown upon England a very unfair and excessive proportion of the burden. Still, when all this was admitted, there was much in the foreign policy of the Government to give a great shock to the national pride. The abrupt termination of the splendid victories of Marlborough; the disgrace of the great general who had raised England to a loftier pinnacle than she had occupied in the palmiest days of Elizabeth; the many shameful, humiliating, and violent incidents which occurred during the negotiations; the final triumphs of France, due in a great measure to an English defection; the abandonment of the Catalan insurgents; the manifest inadequacy of the concessions exacted from France by the treaty, were all keenly felt by those large classes who were not blindly attached to party interests. Besides this, the great question of the succession to the throne began to rise into a greater prominence, and filled the minds of men with anxiety and doubt.

The characters of the ministers were not fitted to reassure them. With the exception of Ormond, none of the Tory leaders were personally popular, though a certain transient enthusiasm had for a few weeks centred upon Oxford after the attempt

upon his life by Guiscard in 1711. The character of Oxford bore in many respects a curious resemblance to that of Godolphin. Both of them were slow, cautious, temporising, moderate, and somewhat selfish men; tedious and inefficient in debate, and entirely without sympathy with the political and religious fanaticisms of their parties. Yet both statesmen passed in the race of ambition several who were far superior to them in intellect, and the qualities to which they owed their success were in a great degree the same. A good private character, great patience, courage, and perseverance, much sobriety of judgment and much moderation in victory, characterised both. But here the resemblance ceased. Cock-fighting, racing, and gambling occupied most of the leisure of Godolphin, while the literary tastes of Oxford made him the idol of the great writers of his day, and reacted very favourably on his position in history. He had, indeed, like Addison and Bolingbroke, the vice of hard-drinking; but in other respects his private life was unassailable. His simple manners, his wide culture, his generous but discriminating patronage of literature, his fidelity in friendship, his freedom from all sordid pecuniary views, gained for him in the circle of those who knew him well, a large measure of respect and even of affection. But in public life his faults were graver than those of Godolphin, and he was far inferior to him in the solid qualities of statesmanship. Though his business habits and his recognised caution and moderation gave him some weight with the mercantile classes, he had no pretension to the consummate financial ability of his rival. He had been Speaker during three parliaments, and his political knowledge was chiefly a knowledge of the forms of the House, and of the dispositions of its members. His special skill lay not in the higher walks of administration, but in parliamentary tactics and in political intrigues, and his intrigues seem to have seldom had any object except his own aggrandisement. He had that kind of mind and character that can attach itself firmly to no party or set of principles, and seeks only for compromise and delay. He was insincere, dilatory, mysterious, and irresolute, entirely incapable of giving his full confidence to his colleagues, of taking any prompt decision, or of committing himself without

reserve to one line of policy. And these defects he showed at a time when resolution and frankness were supremely necessary. One high political quality, it is true, he possessed perhaps more conspicuously than any of his contemporaries. It is the strength of slow and sluggish temperaments that they can often bear the vicissitudes of fortune with a calm constitutional courage rarely attained by more nervous and highly organised natures, and this attribute Oxford pre-eminently displayed. The keenest observer then living pronounced him to be, of all men he had ever known, the least changed either by adversity or prosperity[1]; and he was in this respect rather remarkably distinguished from his brilliant colleague. The genius and daring of Bolingbroke were, indeed, incontestable, but his defects as a party leader were scarcely less. No statesman was ever truer to the interests of his party, but, by a strange contradiction, no leader was ever less fitted to represent it. His eminently Italian character, delighting in elaborate intrigue, the contrast between his private life and his stoical professions, his notorious indifference to the religious tenets which were the very basis of the politics of his party, shook the confidence of the country gentry and country clergy, who formed the bulk of his followers; and he exhibited, on some occasions, an astonishing combination of recklessness and insincerity. In England the House of Commons was mainly Tory; but in the House of Lords the balance of power, even after the creation of the twelve peers, hung doubtfully; and there were several eminent men who had gone cordially with the Tories on the question of the peace, but whose allegiance on other questions was less certain. In Ireland, on the contrary, the peers were entirely subservient to the ministry, while the House of Commons was in violent opposition, and strenuously maintained the principles of the Revolution. Scotland had lost her parliament, but there can be little doubt that her dominant sentiment was Jacobite. In 1711 the Duchess of Gordon openly presented the Faculty of Advocates with a

[1] Swift. See the noble lines of Pope on Harley—

'A soul supreme in each hard instance tried,
Above all pain, all passion, and all pride,
The rage of power, the blast of public breath,
The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.'

medal representing on one side the Pretender, with the words 'Cujus est,' and on the other the British Islands, with the motto 'reddite';[1] and the medal was accepted with thanks by that body. Among the Highlanders and the Episcopalian gentry Jacobitism had always been very powerful, and the Presbyterians of the Lowlands, who might naturally be regarded as the implacable enemies of a Catholic sovereign, and especially of a sovereign of the House of Stuart, were so bitterly hostile to the Union that great numbers of them were prepared to subordinate their whole policy to the single end of obtaining its repeal. Their discontent was greatly increased by the toleration accorded to the Episcopalians, and the Jacobites entertained ardent, though, no doubt, exaggerated, expectations, that the Pretender, by promising repeal, could rally all Scotland to his cause.[2] The Scotch Jacobite party, however, suffered a very serious loss in 1712 by the death of the Duke of Hamilton, who was killed in a duel with Lord Mohun.

In England the probabilities of the next succession were so nearly balanced that there were few leading statesmen who did not more or less enter into Jacobite intrigues, some of them in

[1] See an engraving of this medal in Boyer's *Anne* (folio ed.), p. 511.

[2] This appears very prominently in the Stuart papers. I may give as a sample a few lines from a very able memorial on the state of Jacobitism in the kingdom by Lesley (April, 1711): 'The affair of Greenshields, a minister of the Church of England, whom the Parliament has lately protected against the Presbyterians of Scotland, has irritated the latter to such a degree that they would concur in whatever might deliver them from the Union with England, which is universally detested in Scotland, where they are persuaded that nothing can deliver them from it but the return of their sovereign. . . . . There is not a man in Great Britain who is not convinced that if the King of England had landed the last time in Scotland he would have infallibly succeeded.' — Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 211. See, too, the *Lockhart Papers*. On the other hand, Boyer says that one of the good results of the abortive invasion of Scotland in 1708 was that it 'opened the eyes of the Scotch Presbyterians, most of whom, having been seduced by the Pretender's partisans, had till then appeared obstinately averse to the Union.'—Boyer's *Anne*, p. 336. As late as 1717, Lockhart, reviewing the prospects of Jacobitism in Scotland, wrote: 'Though the King (the Pretender) does not want some friends in the western shires, yet the gross of the people, both gentry and commons, are either Presbyterians favourably disposed towards the present government or pretty indifferent as to all governments whatsoever; but as the far greatest part of both these have an heartie aversion to the Union, if once they were thoroughly convinced that the King's prosperity would terminate in the dissolution thereof, there is reason to believe a great many of the first would be converted at least so far as to be neutral, and most of the others declare for him.' — *Lockhart Papers*, ii. 20.

order to obtain a refuge for themselves in case of a restoration, others in order to obtain the parliamentary support of the Jacobite contingent, and others again through a sincere desire to revert to the old line. In the first category may be placed Marlborough and Godolphin. In July, 1710, when the Godolphin ministry was on the eve of dissolution Marlborough was engaged in intimate correspondence with the Pretender, and a letter is preserved written to him by the wife of the Pretender, imploring him in the most urgent terms not to resign his command, but to retain it in the interests of the Stuarts.[1] As late as 1713, at a time when Marlborough was engaged in the closest correspondence with the Hanoverian party, and when, as there is little reason to doubt, he was sincerely wedded to the Hanoverian cause, a Jacobite agent reports a conversation with him, in which he gave the strongest assurances of his attachment to the cause of the Stuarts.[2] Godolphin was more or less mixed up with Jacobite correspondence to the end of his life. The leaders of that party appear to have had some real belief in his sincerity, and he is said after his expulsion from office to have expressed his deep regret that he had not remained in power long enough to bring in the rightful king.[3] Harley, towards the end of 1710, had sent the Abbé Gaultier, who afterwards took a leading part in the negotiation of the peace, to treat with the Duke of Berwick for the restoration of the Pretender after the death of the Queen, and the Jacobite members were accordingly directed to support his measures,[4] but it does not appear that he had any real desire to restore the Stuarts. The hopes of the party for a time ran very high when the Jacobite Duke of Hamilton was appointed ambassador extraordinary to France, but they soon ceased to trust in Harley, and the leaders of the

[1] Marlborough was at this time also corresponding with the Elector of Hanover.—Macpherson, ii. 157-161, 183.

[2] See the very curious letter of Tunstal to Lord Middleton, Oct. 1713.—Macpherson's *Papers*, ii. 441, 442. See, too, the evidence furnished by the *Memoirs* of Torcy of the respectful way in which Marlborough was accustomed to speak of the Pretender.

[3] See Carte's memorandum, where Godolphin is described as the sincerest friend the Pretender ever had.—Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 170.

[4] *Mémoires du Maréchal de Berwick*, ii. 126-127. A similar direction was given to the Jacobite members in Feb. 1712-3.—Macpherson, ii. 382-383.

Jacobites usually spoke of him with peculiar bitterness. He had in the former reign taken a leading part in framing the Act of Settlement. At the time when the Whig ministry fell, he desired to make a coalition administration, under which Marlborough could still retain his command, and in which he might himself turn the balance of power. When this became impossible he generally tried to moderate the violence of his colleagues, to support a policy of compromise and expedients, and to keep open for himself more than one path of retreat. 'It is my Lord of Oxford's politics,' said a Jacobite agent in 1712, 'to smoothe and check, and he would not have removed the Duke of Marlborough if it had not been absolutely necessary.'[1] As the struggle became more critical he wrapt himself in a veil of impenetrable mystery, avoided as far as possible confidential intercourse either with his colleagues or with Jacobite or Hanoverian agents, procrastinated, kept open communications with the Hanoverians, with the Jacobites, and even with the Whigs; intimated from time to time his willingness to co-operate with the more moderate Whigs; tried, to the great indignation of the October Club, to divide the employments between the High and Low Church; talked obscurely of the necessity of avoiding alike Scylla and Charybdis, and had the air of a man who was still uncertain as to the course he would ultimately pursue.[2] Bolingbroke, on the other hand, though utterly destitute of the beliefs and enthusiasms of a genuine Jacobite, flung himself, from the end of 1712,[3] with decisive impetuosity, into the Jacobite cause, which he now regarded as the only hope for the future of his party. The peace was emphatically a Tory measure, and he had taken, beyond all other statesmen, a leading part in

[1] Macpherson, ii. 280.

[2] Ibid. ii. 380, 390. In Feb. 1712–3, the best judges on both sides seem to have thought him Jacobite. Plunket, one of the leading Jacobite agents, wrote in this month, 'Mr. Harley manages the Low Church and Hanover till he can get the peace settled. Believes him hearty to the King's interest, and has several instances of it, though few of the Jacobites believe him to be so.'—Macpherson, ii. 388. In the same month Robethon, the Hanoverian secretary, wrote: 'My Lord Oxford is devoted irrecoverably to the Pretender and to the King of France.'—Ibid. p. 472. There are numerous other passages in these papers illustrating the fluctuations, uncertainties, and intrigues of Oxford. See, too, the *Lockhart Papers*, i. 365, 482. *Mém. de Berwick*, ii. 126–133.

[3] Macpherson, ii. 366–7. *Lockhart Papers*, i. 412–413.

negotiating it, but the Court of Hanover had protested against it in the strongest terms, and had thrown all its influence into the scale of the Whigs. Besides this a bitter animosity and jealousy had arisen between Bolingbroke and Oxford; and while the more moderate Tories usually supported the latter, the former endeavoured to rally around him the extreme Church party by the stringency of his measures against the Dissenters, and the Jacobites by throwing himself heartily into the cause of the Pretender.

In this manner the balance in the last years of Queen Anne hung very doubtfully. The ministry and the Parliament, indeed, openly professed their attachment to the Protestant succession. The Queen, in more than one speech from the throne, declared that it was in no danger. Both Houses of Parliament passed votes to the same effect. Both Houses voted large sums for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he landed in Great Britain. In both Houses addresses were carried urging his expulsion from Lorraine, to which he had gone after the peace. But at this very time the leading ministers were deeply implicated in Jacobite plots, and the administration of every branch of the service was passing rapidly into Jacobite hands. Ormond, who was a Jacobite, was at the head of the army, and was made Governor of the Cinque Ports, at one of which the new sovereign would probably arrive. The government of Scotland was soon after bestowed on the Jacobite Earl of Mar, while the government of Ireland was in a great degree in the hands of its Jacobite Chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps. When the army was reduced after the peace, it was noticed that officers of known Whig tendencies were systematically laid aside,[1] and the most important trusts were given to suspected Jacobites. The same process was gradually extending over the less conspicuous civil posts.[2] The sentiments of the Queen herself were undecided or vacillating. Her brother had written to her in 1711 and 1712,[3] but it does not appear that she replied. She was drawn to him by a feeling of natural affection, by a feeling, at least as strong, of jealousy and antipathy towards the Hanoverian dynasty, by a conviction that according to the

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 412.

[2] Ibid. ii. 439; Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

[3] Macpherson, ii. 223, 295.

principles of her Church any departure from the strict order of succession was criminal, and in the last part of her reign by the influence of Lady Masham. On the other hand, she knew that if her brother's title was good, her own was invalid, she looked with dread upon the prospect of a Popish successor, and the Duchess of Somerset, who for a short time rivalled the influence of Lady Masham, was decidedly Hanoverian. The Queen felt at the same time the very natural antipathy of a nervous invalid to a constant discussion of what was to come after her death, and to the constant mention of a successor. In July 1712 she permitted the Duke of Buckingham to sound her on the subject, and he easily gathered that the Catholicism of her brother alone prevented her from favouring his succession.[1] She was said to attribute the death of her children to the part she had taken in dethroning her father.[2] Her health was rapidly giving way, and the perplexities of her own mind, and the intrigues and dissensions of her ministers probably accelerated her end. The Whig party now strongly urged the necessity of some member of the Electoral family being in England at the time of her death, but the Queen was inflexibly opposed to such a course, and it is probable if he had come over contrary to her wishes it would have produced a revulsion of feeling very unfavourable to his cause.[3] Alarming rumours were spread that the Pretender was about to be invited over, that he was receiving instructions from an Anglican clergyman, that he was about to declare his adherence to the Protestant Church. The Electress Sophia was now very old, and the

[1] Ibid. 327-331. See, too, the account of her interview with Lockhart, in 1710.—*Lockhart Papers*, i. 315.

[2] Macpherson, ii. 503-504.

[3] Baron von Steinghens, who was at this time residing in London as Minister of the Elector Palatine, and who, while a strong Hanoverian, was also a warm sympathiser with the Government, wrote, 'I can assure you, in spite of the fine promises of the Whigs, that the Parliament would never have voted one sou for the subsistence of this prince if he had come against the will of the Queen, and I can tell you still more, that I have learnt from people of the first order that if the prince had come to this kingdom in that way the Pretender would not have failed to follow him immediately, and that he would have found here all the dispositions which the spite and rage of an insulted Court and party could inspire; so much horror people have of falling again under the domination of the Whigs, the hatred of whom can be compared to nothing better than that of the Catholic Netherlands against the Dutch, either for atrocity or for extent; for I am well assured that there are more than thirty Tories for one Whig in this kingdom.'—To Schulenburg, June 5, 1714 (N.S.); Kemble *State Papers*, p. 502. See, too, Macpherson, ii. 629.

Elector, who managed her affairs, refused to make any real sacrifice in the cause, and appeared to be chiefly anxious to extract as much money as possible from the English Exchequer. He refused to send over his son. He refused, on the plea of poverty, to furnish the secret service money which his partisans pronounced to be absolutely indispensable, while at the same time he pertinaciously urged the Government to give a pension to his mother, and to pay the arrears due to his troops, which had remained with the allies before Quesnoy. Oxford favoured the latter claim, and his cousin, the auditor Harley, introduced the sum clandestinely into the estimates; but Bolingbroke, having heard of it, called a meeting of the Cabinet, and at his desire the claim was disallowed. A large proportion of the Tories were Jacobites, only because they inferred from the attitude of the Elector that he was completely identified with the Whigs, and that his accession to the throne would be a signal for the overthrow of the party, but George Lewis made no attempt whatever to calm their fears.[1] He made no overture to the ministry, which commanded a large majority in the House of Commons and in the country, and, since the creation of the twelve peers, a small majority in the House of Lords. He did not trouble himself to learn even the rudiments of the language of the people over whom he was to rule, nor did he show the smallest interest in their Church. His conduct in this respect was contrasted with that of William, who, some time before he came to the throne, went frequently with his wife to the English Church.[2]

It is impossible to deny that under these circumstances the Protestant succession was in extreme danger, and there was great fear that the intervention of French troops on the side of the Pretender, and of Dutch troops on the side of the Elector,

[1] This was strongly urged by some of the foreign observers. Thus Steinghens wrote: 'The Hanoverian Tories are the party which must be looked after, for it is an illusion to believe that the Whigs alone can bring in the House of Hanover.'—To Schulenburg, May 12, 1714 (N.S.); Kemble, p. 493. Leibnitz wrote: 'They would be very wrong at Hanover to attach themselves only to the Whigs; they ought to attach themselves to the bulk of the nation, and endeavour to abolish these factions.'—Ibid. p. 506.

[2] Swift's *Freethoughts on the Present State of Affairs*. Macpherson, ii. 467–468. See, too, on the great indifference shown by the Elector to the throne of England at the very time when the Queen was dying, a letter of Schulenburg to Leibnitz.—*Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Electrice Sophie*, iii. 76.

might have made England the theatre of a great civil war. The immense majority of the landed gentry and the immense majority of the lower clergy were ardent Tories; these two formed incomparably the strongest classes in England, and it appeared probable that in this great crisis of the national history, under the influence of counteracting motives, they would remain perfectly passive. They hated the Whigs and Nonconformists, and they saw in the Hanoverian succession the ruin of their party. Their leanings and their principles were all on the side of the legitimate line. They looked with a strong English aversion to a German Lutheran prince, who could not even speak the language of his subjects. On the other hand, they dreaded receiving a sovereign from France, and, above all, they would never draw the sword for a king of the religion which was most hateful to the English people, and most hostile to the English Church. Had the Pretender consented to change or even to dissemble his creed, everything would, most probably, have been changed, but, with a magnanimity that may be truly called heroic, all through these doubtful and trying years, he steadily resisted the temptation. He was always ready, indeed, to promise a toleration, but he suffered no obscurity to hang upon his own sentiments. 'Plain dealing is best in all things,' he wrote in May 1711, 'especially in matters of religion; and as I am resolved never to dissemble in religion, so I shall never tempt others to do it, and as well as I am satisfied of the truth of my own religion, yet I shall never look worse upon any persons because in this they chance to differ with me. . . . But they must not take it ill if I use the same liberty I allow to others, to adhere to the religion which I in my conscience think the best.'[1] In September 1713 the same sentiments were strenuously repeated by one of his confidential advisers, in reply to a remonstrance of Lord Mar. It was emphatically stated that there was no chance or possibility of a change of creed, and the Jacobites were ordered not only not to encourage, but steadily to deny all rumours to an opposite effect. 'If it were to receive a crown,' added the writer, 'the King would not do a thing that might reproach either his honour or sincerity. . . . If his friends require this

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 225.

condition from him they do him no favour; for he could compound at that rate with his greatest enemies.'[1] In March 1714, when the Queen was manifestly dying, and when one more urgent demand was made upon the Pretender by those who had most weight in the government of England, he answered with his own hand: 'I neither want counsel nor advice to remain unalterable in my fixed resolution of never dissembling my religion; but rather to abandon all than act against my conscience and honour, cost what it will. . . . How could ever my subjects depend upon me or be happy under me if I should make use of such a notorious hypocrisy to get myself amongst them? . . . My present sincerity, at a time it may cost me so dear, ought to be a sufficient earnest to them of my religious observance of whatever I promise them.'[2] Such an appeal, coming from a Protestant, would have been irresistible, but coming from a Catholic it only increased the uneasiness and distrust. It showed that his devotion to his creed amounted to a passion, and it was the strong conviction of the English people that it is a peculiarity of the Catholic creed that in cases in which its interests are concerned, it can sap, in a thorough devotee, every obligation of secular honour. In a mind thoroughly imbued with the Catholic enthusiasm, attachment to the corporate interest of the Church gradually destroys and replaces the sentiment of patriotism. The belief in the power of the Church to absolve from the obligation of an oath annuls the binding force of the most solemn engagements. The Church is looked upon as so emphatically the one centre upon earth of guidance, inspiration, and truth, that duty is at last regarded altogether through its medium; its interests and its precepts become the supreme measure of right and wrong, and men speedily conclude that no course can possibly be criminal which is conducive to its progress and sanctioned by its head.

The language of the Jacobites and Hanoverians on this subject substantially agrees, and their numerous confidential letters enable us to form a very clear notion of the state of feeling prevailing in England. Thus the eminent Nonjuror Lesley wrote, in April 1711, that if James would induce the

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, pp. 436–437. [2] Ibid. ii. 525–526.

French sovereign to connive at 'allowing the Protestant domestics of the King of England to assemble themselves from time to time at St. Germain's, in order to worship God in the most secret manner that possibly could be, that would do more service [to the Jacobite cause] than 10,000 men. For in England that would appear as a sort of toleration with regard to his attendants; and being obtained by his Britannic Majesty, everyone would consider it as a mark of his inclination to favour his Protestant subjects, and as a pledge of what they might expect from him when he was restored to his throne. . . . If it could be said in England that the King has procured for the Protestant servants who attend him the liberty which is here proposed for them, that would be half the way to his restoration. I only repeat here the very words which I have heard from sensible men in London.'[1] 'The best part of the gentry and half the nobility,' wrote another Jacobite a year later, 'are resolved to have the King, and Parliament would do it in a year if it could be believed he had changed his religion.'[2] 'I am convinced,' wrote the Duke of Buckingham in July 1712, 'that if Harry [the King] would return to the Church of England all would be easy. Nay, from what I know, if he would but barely give hopes he would do so, my brother [Queen Anne] would do all he can to leave him his estate.'[3] 'The country gentlemen,' said an agent of remarkable acuteness, 'are for the Princess Anne and her ministers, and will not be for Hanover. . . . The Parliament will declare neither way. Their business will be to secure the Protestant religion and order matters so that it will not be in the King's power ever to hurt it. . . . The country gentlemen will never be reconciled to the Whigs. . . . Most of them are for having the King, but will hazard nothing.'[4] Another Jacobite writes in April 1713 that if he were the Pope he would oblige James to declare himself a Protestant, as the safest way of securing the crown, and establishing Catholicism, 'and when he completes the work appear with safety in his own shape, and not be beholden to anybody.'[5] Another, writing in August 1713, predicted that the new Parlia-

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 216.
[2] Ibid. ii. 296.
[3] Ibid. ii. 329.
[4] Ibid. pp. 392-393.
[5] Ibid. p. 399.

ment would effect the restoration if the Queen lived long enough to let it sit. 'But the terms will be cruel and unfit to be taken; but if once in possession the power of altering, in time, will of course follow.'[1] The language from the Hanoverian side was little different. Thus Robethon, a Secretary of the Embassy at Hanover, wrote in January 1712–13: 'The Pretender, on the slightest appearance of pretended conversion, might ruin all, the religion, the liberties, the privileges of the nation.'[2] Stanhope, in October 1713, laid his view of the state of affairs before Schutz, the envoy of the Elector in England. 'He does not think there will be fewer Whigs in the next Parliament than in the last, but he has a very bad opinion of it, . . . his opinion is that if things continue never so short a time upon the present footing, the Elector will not come to the crown unless he comes with an army. He believes the greatest number of the country gentlemen are rather against us than for us, but to make amends he assures us that the wisest heads and most honest members have our interest at heart.'[3] Marlborough again and again wrote describing the Protestant succession as in imminent danger.[4] Schutz wrote to his Court in February 1713–14, 'The real state of this kingdom is that all honest men, without distinction of party, acknowledge that although of every ten men in the nation, nine should be for us, it is certain that of fifteen Tories there are fourteen who would not oppose the Pretender in case he came with a French army; but instead of making any resistance to him would be the first to receive and acknowledge him.'[5]

In this conflict of parties the Whigs had some powerful advantages. The country districts, where Toryism was most rife, are never prompt in organising or executing a revolution; while the Whigs, though numerically fewer, were to be found chiefly in the great centres of commercial activity, among the active and intelligent population of the towns. Besides this the Whigs were earnest and united in advocating the Protestant succession, while their opponents were for the most part lukewarm, uncertain, or divided. The number of unqualified

[1] Macpherson, ii. p. 424.
[2] Ibid. p. 466.
[3] Ibid. ii. 505-506.
[4] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.
[5] Macpherson, ii. 556.

Jacobites who would place the government of the country without conditions in the hands of a Roman Catholic sovereign was, probably, very small. A large division of the party were only prepared to restore the Stuarts after negotiations that would secure their Church from all possible danger; and they were conscious that it was not easy to make such terms, that it was extremely doubtful whether they would be observed by a Catholic sovereign, and that the very idea of imposing terms and conditions of obedience was entirely repugnant to their own theory of monarchy. Another section, usually led by Sir Thomas Hanmer, regarded the dangers of a Catholic sovereign as sufficient to outweigh all other considerations, and its members were in consequence sincerely attached to the Hanoverian succession, and desired only that it should be preceded by such negotiations as would secure their party a reasonable share of power. The opinions of the great mass of the party who were not actively engaged in politics oscillated between these two, and were compounded, in different and fluctuating proportions, of attachment to the legitimate line, hatred of Germans, Whigs, and Dissenters, dread of French influence, and detestation of Popery. The Whigs, too, had the great advantage of resting upon the distinct letter of the law. It was, indeed, not forgotten that the reign of Elizabeth was, perhaps, the most glorious in English history, and that Elizabeth had mounted the throne in defiance of an Act of Parliament, which had pronounced her to be illegitimate; yet still, as long as the Act of Settlement remained, the Jacobite was in the position of a conspirator, he was compelled to employ one language in public while he employed another in private, and the great moral weight which in England always attaches to the law was against him. On the other hand, the power of a united administration, supported by a majority in the House of Commons, was extremely great. It was more than probable that it could determine the course of affairs immediately after the decease of the Queen, and when either claimant was in power he was sure to command the support of those large classes whose first desire was to strengthen authority and avert civil war.

But the Government was far from being powerful or united. The peace, though it had excited some clamours, was not

sufficient seriously to shake it; but the commercial treaty with France, which immediately followed it, led to an explosion of party feeling of the most formidable character. It is somewhat humiliating that the measure which most seriously injured the Tory ministry of Anne was that which will now be almost universally regarded as their chief glory. The object of Bolingbroke was to establish a large measure of free trade between England and France; and, had he succeeded, he would have unquestionably added immensely both to the commercial prosperity of England, and to the probabilities of a lasting peace.[1] The eighth and ninth articles of the Treaty, which formed the great subject of discussion, provided that all subjects of the sovereigns of Great Britain and France, in all places, subject to their power on either side, should enjoy the same commercial privileges in all matters relating to duties, impositions, customs, immunities, and tribunals, as the most favoured foreign nation; that within two months the English Parliament should pass a law repealing all prohibitions of French goods which had been imposed since 1664, and enacting that no French goods imported into England should pay higher duties than similar goods imported from any other European country; while, on the other hand, the French repealed all prohibitions of English goods enacted since 1664, and restored the tariff of that year. Some classes of goods, however, it was desired to exempt from these provisions, and commissioners on both sides were appointed to adjust their details.

One of the effects of this measure was virtually to abolish the Methuen treaty, which had been contracted with Portugal in 1703. By that treaty it had been provided that England should admit Portuguese wines at a duty one-third less than that imposed on French wines, and that in consideration of this favour English woollen manufactures should be admitted into Portugal on payment of moderate duties. A charge of bad faith was on this ground raised against the English Government, but the very words of the Methuen treaty were sufficient to refute it. The right of the English to revise their tariff was

[1] See his own admirably statesmanlike letters on the subject to Shrewsbury (May 29), and to Prior (May 31). Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 137–142, 151–154.

clearly reserved by the clause which stated that, 'if at any time this deduction or abatement of customs, which is to be made as aforesaid, shall in any manner be attempted and prejudiced, it shall be just and lawful for his sacred royal Majesty of Portugal again to prohibit the woollen cloths, and the rest of the British woollen manufactures.' The question was solely one of expediency. The Portuguese announced, as they had a perfect right to do, that when the French wines were placed on a level with their own they would withdraw the privileges they had given to the English woollen manufactures, and the sole question for an English statesman was whether the advantages given to British trade by the treaty with France were sufficient to compensate for this withdrawal. On this subject there cannot be a shadow of rational doubt. The enormous market which the English woollen manufactures would have received in France immeasurably outweighed any advantages England could have received from the Portuguese trade. The manner, however, in which the proposition was received in England is one of the most curious instances on record of the influence of an entirely delusive theory of political economy on general policy. According to the mercantile theory which was then in the ascendant, money alone is wealth, the one end in commerce is to obtain as large a share as possible of the precious metals, and therefore no commerce can be advantageous if the value of the imports exceeds that of the exports. In estimating the comparative value of commerce with different nations we have not to consider the magnitude of the transaction—we have simply to ask in what form England receives the price of the articles she exports. If the balance is in money the affair is for her advantage; if it is in goods the commerce is a positive evil, for it diminishes the amount of the precious metals. In accordance with this theory elaborate statistics were made of every branch of national commerce, showing which were advantageous and which detrimental to the nation. In the former category was the trade of Portugal, which the new treaty would probably destroy, for although we brought home wine, oil, and some other things for our own consumption, considerably the greater part of our returns was in silver and gold. The commerce with Spain, with Italy, with Hamburg and other places

in Germany, and with Holland, was for the same reason advantageous, and continually increased the wealth of the community. The commerce with France, on the other hand, was a positive evil, for the productions of that country were so useful and so highly valued by Englishmen that England received goods to a greater value than she exported. The difference was, of course, paid in money, and the trade was, in consequence, according to the mercantile theory, a perpetual and a growing evil. It was estimated by leading commercial authorities that, if the provisions of the commercial treaty were executed, there would soon be an annual balance against England of more than 1,400,000*l.*, while, at the same time, France, by her greater cheapness of labour, could undersell the English in some of their most successful trades. The treaty left England at perfect liberty to impose whatever duties she pleased on the importation of French goods provided the same duties were imposed on similar articles imported from other countries, but in spite of this fact it was confidently asserted that French competition would ruin the wool trade and the silk trade at home. A wild panic passed through the trading classes, and was vehemently fanned by the whole Whig party and by the greatest financial authorities in the country. Godolphin was dead, but Halifax, the founder of the financial system of the Revolution, was prominent in the Opposition. Walpole, the ablest of the rising financiers, took the same side. Stanhope eulogised the law of Charles II. absolutely forbidding the importation of French goods into England. The Bank of England and the Turkey Company threw all their weight into the struggle. Three out of the four members of the City of London, as well as the two members for Westminster, voted against the Bill, and many merchants were heard on the same side at the bar of the House. Defoe attempted to stem the tide in a periodical called the 'Mercator,' but the leading merchants set up a rival paper called 'The British Merchant,' which acquired an extraordinary influence. They maintained that the treaty, if carried into effect, would be more ruinous to the British nation than if London were laid in ashes, that from that moment the wealth of England must be steadily drained away into the coffers of France, that England would lose her best markets both at home and abroad,

that rents must inevitably sink, and that the common people must either starve for want of work, be thrown for subsistence on the parish, or seek their bread in foreign lands. Still more alarming was the revolt of a large section of the Tories under the guidance of Sir Thomas Hanmer. The strength of these combined influences was such that at its last stage the Bill was lost in the Commons by 194 to 185.[1]

The effect of this defeat on the stability of the Government was very perceptible. The immediate danger of a catastrophe was, it is true, averted by a vote of confidence expressing a general satisfaction with the peace; but a ministry which has been once defeated on a capital question rarely recovers its moral force. As Bolingbroke graphically expressed it, 'Instead of gathering strength either as a ministry or a party, we grew weaker every day. The peace had been judged with reason to be the only solid foundation whereupon we could create a Tory system; and yet when it was made we found ourselves at a full stand. Nay, the very work which ought to have been the basis of our strength was in part demolished before our eyes, and we were stoned with the ruins of it.'[2] A Bill, which was immediately afterwards carried, for raising 500,000*l.* to pay the debts of the Queen, appeared somewhat strange to those who knew the great parsimony of her Court, and somewhat suspicious at a time when a general election was impending. The House was prorogued by the Queen with an angry speech in July 1713, and in the following month it was dissolved. It was noticed as a significant fact that in this last Speech from the Throne the customary assurance of the determination of the Queen to maintain the Protestant succession was omitted.

The election, however, did not at first sight appear to modify very seriously the condition of parties. Much use was made by the Whigs of the unpopularity of the commercial treaty and of the anti-popery feeling. Whig candidates appeared at the hustings wearing pieces of wool in their hats; figures of the Pope, the Pretender, and the devil were burnt in numerous places; and a few seats were won; but when the last Parliament

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 1220–1225. Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 622–623. The *British Merchant*. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 165–170.

[2] Letter to Windham.

of Queen Anne assembled, it was found to contain a Tory majority not much smaller than its predecessor. The influence of the Government had been exerted to the utmost, and the Church was still unwavering in its allegiance. In the March preceding the dissolution, the period during which Sacheverell had been excluded from the pulpit by the House of Lords expired, and the event was celebrated with great rejoicings in many parts of the kingdom. He preached his first sermon in St. Saviour's from the text, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' drawing a tacit parallel between his own sufferings and those of Christ; and he was selected on the following anniversary of the Restoration to preach before the House of Commons, was rewarded for his services to the party by the valuable rectory of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and would have been made a bishop but for the refusal of the Queen.[1] In 1713 also, Atterbury, the ablest of the High Church Jacobites, was raised to the bench. The doctrine of the divine right of kings again assumed an alarming prominence in the pulpit, and there were many signs of the increasing confidence of the Jacobites. The birthday of the Pretender was celebrated in Edinburgh with bonfires and fireworks. In Ireland the Chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps, was strongly suspected of Jacobite sentiments, and he was supported by the House of Lords, in which the bishops predominated, and by the Convocation. Men were openly enlisted for the service of the Pretender, and Shrewsbury, who had been sent over as Viceroy, found that the English Government paid much more attention to the recommendations of the Chancellor than to his own. Sir Patrick Lawless, an Irish Roman Catholic, well known to have been the envoy of the Pretender at Madrid, appeared in London with credentials from King Philip. It was reported that the health of the Stuart prince was constantly drunk at meetings and in clubs, and it was certain that Jacobite agents were constantly arriving from France. A metrical edition or adaptation of some of the Psalms, written in the highest strain of Tory loyalty, and entitled 'The Loyal Man's Psalter,' was widely circulated throughout England.

[1] See Lord Dartmouth's note to Burnet, ii. 630; Tindal. Swift is said to have induced Bolingbroke, who had a great contempt for Sacheverell, to give him the living.—Sheridan's *Life of Swift*, p. 116.

Anonymous letters were sent to the mayors and magistrates, during the elections, urging them to promote the interests of the Pretender, and suggesting that such a course would be acceptable to the Queen and to her ministers. A book which had lately appeared, called 'The Hereditary Right of the Crown of England Asserted,' maintaining the absolute criminality of all departure from the strict order of succession, was distributed gratuitously far and wide; its title-page appeared on Sunday mornings on every prominent door or post to attract the attention of the congregations, and a copy of it is said to have been presented by Nelson, the Nonjuror, to the Queen. Violent remonstrances, however, having been made, the Government ordered a prosecution to be instituted, and a Nonjuror clergyman, named Bedford, who was found guilty of having brought the manuscript to the printer,[1] incurred a severe sentence, part of which was remitted by the Queen.[2]

It was evident that the crisis was at hand. The Queen, in the beginning of 1714, had a very dangerous illness, and it was certain that her life could not be greatly prolonged. 'If in this life only they have hope,' said Wharton, with his usual profane wit, pointing in turn to the Queen and to the ministers, 'they are of all men the most wretched.' The reorganisation of the army in the Jacobite interest was rapidly proceeding. Considerable sums had been sent, in 1711, by the Treasurer to the chiefs of Scotch clans, who were notoriously Jacobite, with commissions empowering them to arm their followers for Her Majesty's service;[3] and in January 1713–14 Marlborough wrote to Robethon, 'The ministers drive on matters so fast in favour of the Pretender that everybody must agree if something farther be not done in the next sessions of Parliament towards securing the succession, it is to be feared it may be irretrievably lost.'[4] In February, Gaultier wrote, at the dictation of Oxford, a letter to the Pretender, in emphatic terms, urging him, as the indispensable condition to obtaining the support of the Queen and ultimately the crown, to change, or at least to dissemble,

[1] Its author was a Nonjuror, named Harbin. See Lathbury's *Hist. of the Nonjurors.*

[2] Boyer, Tindal, Somerville. Coxe, *Life of Marlborough.*

[3] *Lockhart Papers*, i. p. 377.

[4] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

his creed; but the answer was a refusal so clear and so decisive that it completely disconcerted the tactics of the party. Bolingbroke said, with perfect truth, to Iberville, the French secretary of legation, that if the Elector of Hanover ever mounted the English throne it would be entirely the fault of the Pretender, who thus refused to accept the one essential condition; and Iberville himself fully shared the opinion, and predicted that, without conformity to the Church of England, King James would never obtain the sincere support of the Tories.[1] Argyle, whose enmity to Marlborough had been very useful to the ministry, but who was strongly attached to the Hanoverian succession, was removed from all his places; and Lord Stair, who was also Hanoverian, was obliged to dispose of his regiment. Oxford, however, hesitated more and more, kept up communications with the Jacobites, but threw obstacles in the path of every decisive measure in their favour, sent his cousin Harley to Hanover to express his sentiments of devotion to the Elector, tended slowly and irresolutely towards the Whigs, and was trusted by neither party, but courted by both.[2] Bolingbroke now looked upon his colleague with a deadly aversion, and made it a main object of his policy to displace him, and though he may, perhaps, have had no very settled or irrevocable design of bringing in the Pretender, he felt that he had gone too far for safety, and was anxious at least to reorganise the party on a strong Church basis, so that at the death of the Queen he might be the master of the situation.[3]

The Parliament met on the 16th of February, and it soon appeared that the strength of the Government was much shaken. In the Lords the Whig majority was all but re-

[1] See the passages from the Paris archives quoted in Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 55.

[2] See in Macpherson the Stuart and Hanoverian Papers for 1714; also the *Lockhart Papers*, i. 369, 370.

[3] See a very remarkable passage in one of his letters, April 13, 1713. 'The prospect before us is dark and melancholy. What will happen no man is able to foretell, but this proposition is certain, that if the members of the Church of England lay aside their little piques and resentments, and cement closely together, they will be too powerful a body to be ill-treated.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 499. In his letter to Sir W. Windham, he afterwards said, 'As to what might happen afterwards on the death of the Queen, to speak truly, none of us had any settled resolution.' See also a letter of his to Lord Marchmont. — *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 192.

stored. In the Commons the Tories formed a large majority, but their discipline was broken, they were divided between the Hanoverian Tories and the Jacobites, between the followers of Bolingbroke and the followers of Oxford, and the jealousies, the vacillations, the conflicting counsels of their leaders in a great degree paralysed their strength.* The Queen, in her opening speech, spoke severely of the excesses of the press, and of those who had 'arrived to that height of malice as to insinuate that the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover is in danger under my government;' but there is little doubt that at this very time her sympathies were with the Pretender. The House of Commons expelled Steele ostensibly for the publication of a pamphlet called 'The Crisis,' really on account of his decided Whig views. The House of Lords retaliated by offering a reward for the discovery of the author of 'The Public Spirit of the Whigs,' an anonymous pamphlet which Swift had written in reply to 'The Crisis,' and which had excited much indignation in the North by its bitter reflections upon the Scots. The Whigs in the House of Lords brought forward, with much effect, the case of the Catalans who had been so shamefully abandoned, and also the commercial treaty; and Wharton, supported by Cowper and Halifax, introduced a scandalous resolution urging the Queen to issue a proclamation offering a reward for anyone who should apprehend her brother alive or dead. Nothing was said about this reward being contingent upon acts of hostility against England, and it might have been claimed by anyone who murdered the Pretender while he was living peacefully in Lorraine. The address was carried without a division, but the better feeling of the House of Lords, after some reflection, revolted against it, and a clause was substituted merely asking the Queen to offer a reward for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he landed in the kingdom.[1] The Queen answered that she saw no present necessity for such a proclamation. Several other motions for the defence of the Hanoverian succession were carried through Parliament, and were accepted with apparent alacrity by the Government, but Bolingbroke, on at least one occasion, privately assured the French envoy that they

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, vi. 1337–1338.

would make no difference.[1] Nor did they deceive the people. An uneasy feeling was abroad. Men felt as if on the brink of a great convulsion. The stocks fell, and it was evident that the dread of a Popish sovereign was in the ascendant. Mutinous proceedings were reported among the soldiers at Gibraltar and some other quarters, and Bolingbroke wrote with much alarm about the necessity of changing garrisons, and about the dangerous spirit of faction which had arisen among the troops.[2] The bishops also began to waver in their allegiance to the Government. A motion 'that the Protestant succession was in danger under the present administration,' moved by Wharton, in the House of Lords, was only defeated by a majority of twelve, and it was a very significant fact that the Archbishop of York and the majority of his brethren voted against the Government. In the House of Commons a similar motion was defeated by 256 to 208, and was supported by a considerable body of Tories under the leadership of Sir Thomas Hanmer who was Speaker of the House, and whose elevation to that position Oxford had warmly supported, in the vain hope of in this manner diverting him from opposition.[3] In a confidential letter to Lord Strafford, dated March 23, Bolingbroke said: 'In both Houses there are the best dispositions I ever saw, but I am sorry to tell you that these dispositions are unimproved; the Whigs pursue their plans with good order and in concert. The Tories stand at gaze, expect the Court should regulate their conduct and lead them on, and the Court seems in a lethargy. Nothing, you see, can come of this, but what would be at once the greatest absurdity and the greatest misfortune. The minority, and that minority unpopular, easily get the better of the majority who have the Queen and the nation on their side.'[4] Oxford still held the position of Prime Minister, and had the foremost place in the party and with the Queen, but his brilliant and impetuous colleague was in both quarters rapidly superseding him, and with him the star of Jacobitism rose in the ascendant. The Jacobite appointments were more decided and more numerous, and the Schism Act, which was

[1] Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. p. 85.
[2] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 489.
[3] Bunbury's *Life of Hanmer*, p. 42.
[4] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 494.

at this time carried, was believed by the party to have intimidated the Dissenters, and at the same time secured anew the full support of the Church.

And yet even at this time the policy of Bolingbroke was, probably, less unfaltering than has been supposed. When speaking at a later period of these anxious months, he said: 'Nothing is more certain than this truth, that there was at this time no formed design in the party, whatever views some particular men might have, against his Majesty's succession,'[1] and the assertion, if not strictly accurate, appears to me to have at least approximated to the truth. It is certain that though he now led the Jacobite wing, though he continually and unreservedly expressed to Jacobites his sympathy with their cause,[2] and though his policy manifestly tended towards a Restoration, he was never a genuine Jacobite. He was driven into Jacobitism by the force of the Jacobite contingent in his party, by his antagonism to Oxford, which led him to rely more and more upon that contingent, by the increasing difficulty of receding from engagements into which he had entered in order to obtain parliamentary support, by the necessity he was under as a minister of the Crown of opposing the Whig scheme of bringing over the Electoral Prince contrary to the strongest wishes of the Queen, by the violent opposition of Hanover to the peace, by the close and manifest alliance that had been established between the Hanoverian Court and the Whig party. In his eyes, however, the restoration of the House of Stuart was not an end but a means. The real aim of his policy was to maintain the ascendancy of that Church or Tory party which, as he truly boasted, represented, under all normal circumstances, the overwhelming preponderance of English opinion. To re-establish that ascendancy which had been shaken by the victories of Marlborough was the chief motive of the Peace of Utrecht; to secure its continuance was the real end

[1] Letter to Sir W. Windham.

[2] *Lockhart Papers*, i. 441, 442, 460, 461, 470, 477, 478. The extent of Bolingbroke's direct negotiations with the Pretender is chiefly shown by the papers from the French archives in the Mackintosh collection. Some of them have been printed in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. lxii. and in Bunbury's *Life of Hanmer*. Lord Stanhope has made use of them with his usual skill. See too the remarkable statement of Walpole. Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 48.

of his dynastic intrigues. If he could have obtained from the head of the House of Hanover an assurance that the royal favour, under the new dynasty, would still be bestowed on his party, it is very probable that he would have supported the Act of Settlement. But the Elector was plainly in the hands of the Whigs, and the party interest of the Tory leader attracted him to the Stuarts. At the same time, so far as we can judge his motives, his immediate object seems to have been to place the whole administration of civil and military matters into the hands of men who, while they had a certain leaning towards Jacobitism, were beyond all things Tories, and might be trusted fully to obey a Tory Government. Had this been done he would have commanded the position, and been able on the death of the Queen to dictate his terms and to decide the succession. That his decision would have been in favour of the Stuarts, his engagements and his present policy made most probable, but it is also probable that to the very close of his ministerial career he had never formed in his own mind an irrevocable decision. The result would probably have depended on the relative strength of the Jacobite and Hanoverian elements in the Tory party, on the power of the Opposition, on the policy of the rival candidates; and a change in the religion of one of them or in the political attitude of the other, might, even at the last moment, have proved decisive.

This, as far as I can understand it, is the true key to the policy of Bolingbroke. But his own very natural hesitation in taking a step that might cost him his head, the much greater hesitation of Oxford, and the activity of the Whig Opposition, had hitherto trammelled it. The Peace of Utrecht was carried, and it was a great step towards Tory ascendancy; but it is remarkable that, although it was supported by the Jacobites, its terms were by no means favourable to their interest. The recognition by France of the Hanoverian succession, and the removal of the Pretender to Lorraine, were not, indeed, matters of much consequence, but the arrangement with Holland was of a very different order of importance. We have seen that, by the barrier treaty of 1709, England guaranteed a very extensive barrier, while the States-General guaranteed the Hanoverian succession, and undertook 'to furnish by sea or land the suc-

cour and assistance' necessary to maintain it. This treaty, having been condemned by Parliament, was abrogated, but a new treaty, with the same general objects, was signed in January 1712–13. It was much less favourable than its predecessor to the Dutch, but it still retained the guarantee of the Hanoverian succession, and even made it more precise. England engaged to support Holland, if her barrier was assailed, with a fleet of twenty men-of-war, and an army of 10,000 men. Holland engaged to furnish the same number of vessels and an army of 6,000 men, at the request either of the Queen or of the Protestant heir, to defend the Protestant succession whenever it was in danger. This treaty was negotiated by the Tory Government, and its great value to the House of Hanover was at a later period abundantly shown. No measure was more obnoxious to the Jacobites. They were accustomed to ask with some plausibility whether the supporters of the House of Hanover were in reality the friends of English liberty which they pretended. They were about to place the sceptre of England in the hands of a German prince, who was wholly ignorant of the English constitution, and accustomed to despotic rule in his own country. He already disposed of a German army altogether beyond the control of the English Parliament. He would find in England many thousands of refugees driven from a despotic country, who would support his dynasty at any sacrifice as representing the cause of Protestantism in Europe, but who were likely to care very little for the British constitution; and if, by exceeding his powers, he arrayed his subjects against him, he could summon over 6,000 Dutch troops to his support. If the German prince happened to be an able, ambitious, and arbitrary man, he would thus be furnished with means of attacking the liberties of England such as Charles I. had never possessed.[1]

On the other hand, as the Jacobite wing rose with Bolingbroke to the ascendant, the reorganisation of the army rapidly advanced. At the time when Marlborough was removed from command, a project seems to have been much discussed in political circles of making the Elector of Hanover commander

[1] See the powerful statement of these dangers in the address issued by the Pretender, Aug. 29, 1714.

in Flanders;[1] but such a measure, if it was ever proposed, was speedily put aside, and it was doubtless expected that Ormond would in time make the army what he desired. But Bolingbroke had no wish to let the Jacobite movement pass out of his control; and it is remarkable that, even in the latter days of June 1714, he wrote to the Lords Justices of Ireland, urging them to search diligently for all persons who were recruiting for the Pretender, and to prosecute them with the full rigour of the law.[2]

It was difficult for the most sagacious man to predict the issue. Berwick strongly urged upon the Jacobites that they should induce the Queen to take the bold step of inviting the Pretender over during her lifetime, and presenting him to the Parliament as her successor, on the condition that he bound himself to defend the liberties of the Church;[3] and Lord Townshend wrote to Hanover that the Whig party entertained strong

[1] This is stated in a MS. letter from J. Williams to Josh. Dawson, Jan. 8, 1711, in the Irish State Paper Office. Rumours to the same effect seem to have been floating for some time. As early as 1703 this measure was discussed (*Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Électrice Sophie*, iii. 61–70). and on Feb. 14, 1707–8, one of the informants of Dawson (who was Secretary at Dublin Castle) wrote from London: 'There is a story in town, how true I cannot tell—you shall hear it—that at the Council, when Lord Marlborough said he could not serve any longer, several of the lords gave their opinion that if my lord laid down his commission we had none able to command the forces, nor none that had such interest with the allies as his Grace; on which Lord Wharton said there was one who he thought as able, and every way as well qualified to head the English army, and one who he thought should be better known to the English, and that he was not ashamed to name him, which was the Elector of Hanover. This, they say, made everybody there mute.'—B. Butler to Josh. Dawson, Irish State Paper Office. In 1707 the Elector actually obtained a command on the Rhine, which he resigned in 1710.

[2] 'I enclose a copy of a letter from Captain Rouse, Commander of Her Majesty's ship the "Saphire," wherein your Excellencies will find an account of several men who have been listed in Ireland and carried to France for the service of the Pretender, and that one Fitz-Simonds, a merchant of Dublin, is mentioned to be chiefly concerned in raising these recruits. I am, therefore, to acquaint your Excellencies it is Her Majesty's pleasure that you enquire into the conduct of this merchant, that you use your utmost diligence to gain a true knowledge of this fact, and to discover all practices of the like nature, and that by a rigorous prosecution of those who have been already found to be guilty of them your Excellencies should as much as possible deter others from attempting the same.' (June 15, 1714.) On the 26th he again writes, urging the prosecution of Fitz-Simonds 'if he appear guilty of conveying men out of Her Majesty's dominions into the service of the Pretender;' and another letter was written on the same subject after the death of the Queen (Aug. 7, 1714). MSS. Irish State Paper Office. Shrewsbury had issued a strong proclamation against enlistments for the Pretender (*Dublin Gazette*, May 28, 1714).

[3] *Mémoires de Berwick*, ii. 129–130.

fears that some such course might be adopted.[1] The Jacobite Lord Hamilton was reported to have said that 'he who would be first in London after the Queen's death would be crowned. If it is the Pretender he will have the crown, undoubtedly, and if it is the Elector of Hanover, he will have it.'[2] Schutz wrote in March to the same effect: 'Of ten who are for us, nine will accommodate themselves to the times, and embrace the interests of him who will be the first on the spot, and who will undoubtedly have the best game and all the hopes of success, rather than expose themselves by their opposition to a civil war, which appears to them a real and an immediate evil; whereas they flatter themselves that the government of the Pretender, whom they look upon as a weak prince, will not be such a great evil as civil war.'[3] The Whig leaders were not inactive. While the Government were placing Jacobites in the most important military posts, Stanhope was concerting measures with the French refugee officers, who were naturally violently opposed to the Pretender; Marlborough, who was still on the Continent, was arranging with the Dutch to send over a fleet and an army, and he undertook to employ his influence with the troops who were stationed at Dunkirk, and, if necessary, to invade England at their head. Another measure was taken which threw the Government into great perplexity. The Queen was inflexibly opposed to the residence of any member of the Hanoverian family in England; but the Electoral Prince, the son of the Elector, had been made Duke of Cambridge, and as such had a right to sit in the House of Lords. At the urgent request of the Whig leaders, Schutz, without informing either the Queen or the ministers, applied to the Chancellor Harcourt for a writ enabling the prince to take his seat. The chancellor, who was deeply mixed in Jacobite intrigues, was extremely embarrassed, but it was impossible to refuse the demand. The Government treated it as a direct insult to the sovereign. The Queen herself was exceedingly incensed. She wrote angry letters of remonstrance to the Electress Sophia, to the Elector, and to the Prince himself. She forbade Schutz to appear at her court, and insisted

[1] Macpherson, ii. 596–597.
[2] Ibid., ii. 557.
[3] Ibid., ii. 572–573.

on his recall. The Elector, to the rage and disappointment of the Whigs, refused to send over his son. On May 28th the old Electress Sophia died suddenly, her death having, it is said, been hastened by her annoyance at the letters from the Queen;[1] and the Elector, according to the Act of Settlement, became the immediate heir to the British throne.

The Parliament was prorogued on July 9, and it left England in a condition of the strangest confusion. The Queen was dying, and the fierce conflicts among her servants and in her own mind at once embittered and accelerated her end. A Tory ministry, commanding a large majority in the House of Commons and a majority perhaps still larger in the country, was in power; but both the Government and those whom it represented were distracted by internal dissensions, and were wholly uncertain in the object of their policy. A question, which was one of the most momentous in the history of the nation, was imminent. It was whether the monarchy of England should rest upon the Tory principle of the Divine right of kings, or on the principles established by the Revolution. The answer to this question might determine the fate of parliamentary institutions in England, and would certainly determine for more than a generation the character of its legislation, the position of its parties, the habitual bias of its Government. Had it been decided simply on this issue, there can be little doubt of the result. All the instincts, all the traditions, all the principles and enthusiasms of the Tory party inclined them to the Stuarts, and, as Bolingbroke truly said, a Whig ascendancy in England could in that age only rest upon adventitious and exceptional circumstances. Under all normal conditions, 'the true, real, genuine, strength of Britain' lay with the Tories. The persistent Catholicism of the Pretender, however, had connected with this great issue another, on which the popular feeling ran strongly in the opposite direction, and the dread of Popery was the great counterpoise to the love of legitimacy. The Government had naturally an immense power of determining the result, but the fatal division between its chiefs, and the fatal irresolution of the character of Oxford,

[1] *Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Électrice Sophie*, iii. 481, 483. See too a letter of Mr. Molyneux to Marlborough. Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

had during several critical months all but suspended its action. On May 18, while Parliament was still sitting, Swift wrote a letter to Peterborough which clearly described the situation: 'I never led a life so thoroughly uneasy as I do at present. Our situation is so bad that our enemies could not, without abundance of invention and ability, have placed us so ill if we had left it entirely to their management. . . . . The Queen is pretty well at present, but the least disorder she has puts us all in alarm, and when it is over we act as if she were immortal. Neither is it possible to persuade people to make any preparation against the evil day.'[1]

The position of Swift at this time is well worthy of attention, for his judgment was that of a man of great shrewdness as well as great genius, and he probably represented the feelings of many of the more intelligent members of his party. Though a fierce, unscrupulous, and singularly scurrilous political writer, he was not, in the general character of his politics, a violent man,[2] and the inconsistency of his political life has been very grossly exaggerated. It was almost inevitable that a young man, brought up as Secretary to Sir W. Temple, should enter public life with Whig prepossessions. It was almost equally inevitable that a High Church divine should, in the party conflicts under Queen Anne, ultimately gravitate to the Tories. Personal ambition, no doubt, as he himself very frankly admitted, contributed to his change, but there was nothing in it of that complete and scandalous apostasy of which he has often been accused. From first to last an exclusive Church feeling was his genuine passion. It appeared fully, though in a very strange form, in the 'Tale of a Tub,'

[1] Swift's *Correspondence*. Bolingbroke's letters show a despondency quite as great. Writing to Prior, July 19, he said, 'These four or five months last past have afforded such a scene as I hope never again to be an actor in. All the confusion which could be created by the disunion of friends and malice of enemies has subsisted at Court and in Parliament.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 561-562. Writing to Swift on the 13th of the same month, he said, 'If my grooms did not live a happier life than I have done this great while I am sure they would quit my service.' — Swift's *Correspondence*, i. 469. (Ed. 1766.)

[2] His genuine political opinion was expressed by him in one very happy and characteristic sentence, 'Whoever has a true value for Church and State should avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory on account of the latter.'—*Sentiments of a Church of England Man.*

which was published as early as 1704. It appeared still more strongly in his 'Project for the Reformation of Manners,' in his 'Sentiments of a Church of England Man,' in his 'Argument against abolishing Christianity,' in his 'Letter to a Member of Parliament against taking off the Test in Ireland;' all of which were published at the time when he was ostensibly a Whig.[1] It appeared not less clearly many years afterwards in his Irish tracts, written at a period when it would have been eminently conducive to the objects he was aiming at to have rallied all religions in opposition to the Government. In the later part of the reign of Anne political parties were grouped, much more than in the previous reign, by ecclesiastical considerations; and, after the impeachment of Sacheverell, the Tory party had become, before all things, the party of the Church. On the other hand, Swift never appears to have wavered in his attachment to the Protestant line; and there is not the smallest evidence that he had at any period of his life the slightest communication with St. Germain's. His position in the party was a very prominent one. He was, without exception, the most effective political writer in England at a time when political writing was of transcendent importance. His influence contributed very much to that generous and discriminating patronage of literature which was the special glory of the Tory ministry of Anne. To his pen we owe by far the most powerful and most rational defence of the Peace of Utrecht that has ever been composed; and although, like the other writers of his party, he wrote much in a strain of disgraceful scurrility against Marlborough, it is at least very honourable to his memory that he disapproved of, and protested against, the conduct of the ministers in superseding that great general in the midst of the war.[2] In the crisis which we are considering, he strongly urged upon them to reconcile themselves with the Elector; and he came over specially from Ireland in order to compose the differences in the Cabinet. Having failed

[1] See also a curious letter on the Occasional Conformity Bill, to Esther Johnson, written as early as 1703. Swift's *Correspondence*, pp. 1–4.

[2] *Journal to Stella*, Jan. 7, 1711–12. In one of his letters to Steele, dated May 27, 1713, he says, 'As to the great man (Marlborough) whose defence you undertake, though I do not think so well of him as you do, yet I have been the cause of preventing 500 hard things to be said against him.'—Scott's ed. xvi. p. 69.

in his attempt, he retired to the house of a friend in Berkshire, and there wrote a remarkable appeal to the nation, which shows clearly his deep sense of the dangers of the time. Though he was much more closely connected, both by personal and political sympathy, with Oxford than with Bolingbroke, he now strongly blamed the indecision and procrastination of the former, and maintained that the party was in such extreme and imminent danger that nothing but the most drastic remedies could save it. The great majority of the nation, he maintained, had two wishes. The first was, 'That the Church of England should be preserved entire in all her rights, power, and privileges; all doctrines relating to government discouraged which she condemned; all schisms, sects, and heresies discountenanced.' The second was, the maintenance of the Protestant succession in the House of Brunswick, 'not for any partiality to that illustrious house further than as it had the honour to mingle with the blood royal of England, and is the nearest branch of our royal line reformed from Popery.' He proceeded, in language which showed some insincerity or some blindness, to deny the existence of any considerable Jacobitism outside the Nonjuror body, maintaining that the supporters of the theory of passive obedience could have no difficulty in supporting a line which they found established by law, and were not at all called upon by their principles to enter into any historical investigation of the merits of the Revolution. But the danger of the situation lay in the fact that the heir to the throne had completely failed to give any assurance to the nation that he would support that Church party to which the overwhelming majority of the nation was attached; that he had, on the contrary, given all his confidence to the implacable enemies of that party—to the Whigs, Low Churchmen, and Dissenters. Swift maintained that the only course that could secure the party was the immediate and absolute exclusion of all such persons from every description of civil and military office. The whole government of the country, in all its departments, must be thrown into the hands of Tories, and it would then be impossible to displace them. This was necessary because the Whigs had already proved very dangerous to the constitution in Church and State, because they were highly

irritated at the loss of power, 'but principally because they have prevailed, by misrepresentations and other artifices, to make the successor look upon them as the only persons he can trust, upon which account they cannot be too soon or too much disabled; neither will England ever be safe from the attempts of this wicked confederacy until their strength and interests shall be so far reduced that for the future it shall not be in the power of the Crown, although in conjunction with any rich and factious body of men, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons.' He at the same time urged that the Elector should be peremptorily called upon by the Queen to declare his approbation of the policy of the Queen's ministers, and to disavow all connection with the Whigs.[1]

It must be owned that this pamphlet showed very little of that extreme subservience to royal authority for which the Tory party had been so often reproached. The policy indicated, if openly avowed, might have led to a civil war, and Bolingbroke probably showed much wisdom in inducing Swift to withhold the publication. Though caring only for the ascendancy of the Tory party, Bolingbroke had by this time gone so far in the direction of Jacobitism that it was difficult to recede, and the policy of the Government tended more and more to a restoration of the Stuarts. Yet Oxford opposed to the last any step which amounted to an irrevocable decision, and at the time when Parliament was prorogued nothing had been arranged. Many military and civil appointments had, indeed, been made in the interest of the Pretender, but nothing had been done to induce the Queen to invite him over, or to determine formally the conditions on which he might mount the throne, or the plan of operations after the death of the Queen. The leaders in France became more and more convinced of the insincerity of Oxford. Berwick and Torcy wrote to him representing that the Queen's death might happen very shortly, and asking for a distinct account of his measures to secure in that case the interests of the legitimate heir, as well as of the steps the Prince himself should take; but they could obtain no other answer than that, if the Queen now died, the affairs both of the

[1] *Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs* (1714).

Stuarts and of the Government were ruined without resource.[1] France was so exhausted after the late struggle that she could not venture, at the risk of another war, to support the Pretender by force of arms; and it was also an unfortunate circumstance for his cause that about this time Berwick, who was one of its chief supports, received a command in Catalonia.

The object of the Jacobites under these circumstances was to displace Oxford, and they had no great difficulty in accomplishing it. The influence which his good private character and his moderate and compromising temperament once gave him in the country had been rapidly waning. His party were disgusted with his habitual indecision. The Queen had to complain of many instances of gross and scandalous disrespect[2]; but the influence which at last turned the scale was that of Lady Masham. She was now wholly in the interests of the Jacobites. She had quarrelled violently with Oxford about a pension, and, at the request of the Jacobite leaders, she used her great influence with the Queen to procure his dismissal. Seldom has it been given to a woman wholly undistinguished by birth, character, beauty, or intellect to affect so powerfully the march of affairs. Her influence, though by no means the sole, was undoubtedly a leading, cause of the change of ministry in 1710, which saved France from almost complete ruin, and determined the Peace of Utrecht. Her influence in 1714 all but altered the order of succession in England, and with it the whole course of English politics. On July 27, after a long and violent altercation in the Cabinet, Oxford was dismissed, the Queen resumed the white staff of Treasurer, and Bolingbroke became Prime Minister.

The cause of the Protestant succession had now touched its nadir. Bolingbroke, it is true, on this memorable occasion invited the Whig leaders to a conference at his house,[3] but they would give him no support unless he attested his sincerity by insisting on the expulsion of the Pretender from Lorraine; and on that very day he assured Gaultier that his sentiments towards the Stuart prince were unchanged,[4] and he

[1] *Mém. de Berwick*, ii. 131.

[2] Erasmus Lewis to Swift, July 27, 1714.—Swift's *Correspondence*.

[3] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 49. This fact is, I think, very significant of the true motives of Bolingbroke. See too Macpherson, ii. 532, 533.

[4] Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 88.

proceeded to sketch the outlines of a ministry almost exclusively Jacobite. There is every reason to believe that such a ministry, supported by the Queen, presided over by a statesman eminently skilful, daring, and unscrupulous, and disposing of all the civil and military administration of the country, could, in the existing condition of England, have effected the restoration of the Stuarts. Pledges would have been exacted for the security of the Church, but such pledges would readily have been granted. Time was now of vital importance, and as Parliament had been recently prorogued, the ministers were likely, during several months, to be practically unfettered. Bolingbroke, a few days later, assured Iberville that his measures had been so well taken that in six weeks matters would have been placed in such a condition that he would have had nothing to fear.[1] He proposed to retain in the new Government his old position of Secretary of State with the control of all foreign affairs. Bromley and Lord Mar were to be the other two secretaries. Atterbury, whose fierce and brilliant genius was much more fitted for the arena of politics than for the episcopacy, and who was the idol of the lower clergy, was to have the Privy Seal. Harcourt was to continue Chancellor. The Dukes of Ormond and Buckingham, who were conspicuous among the adherents of the Pretender, were to be respectively Commander-in-Chief and Lord President. The Treasury, which had lately carried with it the chief power in the Government, was to be placed in commission. Windham, the brother-in-law and devoted friend of Bolingbroke, was to be placed at its head, but the names of the other commissioners were undecided after a long and angry discussion, which lasted far into the night. All these statesmen were Jacobites. One, however, remained, whose position was still ambiguous. The Duke of Shrewsbury occupied a position which made it difficult for him

See, too, the account of Bolingbroke's conversations with his Scotch supporters in the *Lockhart Papers*.

[1] After the death of the Queen, Iberville wrote to the French King: 'My Lord Bolingbroke est pénétré de douleur de la perte de la Reyne, au point de sa fortune particulière et de la consommation de toutes les affaires qui ont esté faites depuis quatre ans. Il m'a assuré que les mesures étoient si bien prises qu'en six semaines de temps on auroit mis les choses en tel estat qu'il n'y auroit eu rien à craindre de ce qui vient d'arriver.'—13 Août, 1714 (N.S.), *MSS.* Paris Foreign Office.

to be subordinate to any other minister, though at the same time a great disinclination for the rough work of public life, and some weakness of character, incapacitated him for the foremost place in active politics. On the death of the Duke of Hamilton he had been sent to Paris as ambassador to negotiate the peace. He was afterwards appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and he held that position at the time of the dismissal of Oxford. He had there professed his attachment to the Protestant succession, but not more than Oxford and Bolingbroke in England, and he appears to have persuaded the latter that he was devoted to his fortunes. The Jacobite cause, under the influence of the Irish Chancellor, seemed ascendant in Ireland, with the important exception of the House of Commons, which continued violently Whig; and Shrewsbury, having vainly attempted to secure a Tory majority by an election, consented, at the desire of the ministers, to prorogue the Parliament abruptly, thus apparently destroying the best security of the Protestant succession in Ireland. He at the same time carefully concealed his own sentiments, came over to England to watch the course of events, and received constant private intelligence of the condition of the Queen's health from her physician, Dr. Shadwell.

Such was the condition of affairs when an event occurred in which the partisans of the Protestant succession long loved to trace the special intervention of a gracious Providence. On the very day following the dismissal of Oxford—when everything was still unsettled—when the destinies of the kingdom trembled in the balance—the Queen was struck down by a mortal illness. The excitement of the protracted struggle had been too much for her failing strength. The council sat in her presence till two in the morning of the 28th, and had been disturbed by the most furious altercations. She retired at last, weary, anxious, and agitated, saying to those about her that she would never outlive the scene, and she sank almost immediately into a lethargic illness. Next day the imposthume in her leg suddenly ceased. The gout flew to her brain, and she was manifestly dying.

The crisis had now come, and those who had been so lately flushed with the prospect of assured power were wholly

unprepared. They assembled in Privy Council at Kensington, where a strange scene is said to have occurred. Argyle and Somerset, though they had contributed largely by their defection to the downfall of the Whig ministry of Godolphin, were now again in opposition to the Tories, and had recently been dismissed from their posts. Availing themselves of their rank of Privy Councillors, they appeared unsummoned in the council room, pleading the greatness of the emergency. Shrewsbury, who had probably concocted the scene, rose and warmly thanked them for their offer of assistance; and these three men appear to have guided the course of events. At their request the physicians were examined, and they deposed that the Queen was in imminent danger. The Council resolved that the great office of Treasurer should be at once filled, and that it should be filled by Shrewsbury.[1] There was no opposition. Bolingbroke is said himself to have made the proposition, and both he and his colleagues appeared stupified by the sudden change. They knew

[1] This is the account given by Boyer, Tindal, and Oldmixon, and reproduced by most later historians. Mr. Wyon, however, has justly observed, in his valuable *History of Queen Anne* (vol. ii., pp. 524–526), that it is not quite consistent with the letters written by Ford to Swift (July 31 and Aug. 5). Ford, who was a Government official, and wrote from the spot, says: 'The Whigs were not in the Council when he (Shrewsbury) was recommended. Lord Bolingbroke proposed it there as well as to the Queen.' Boyer says that after Argyle and Somerset had appeared in the Council 'one of the Council' represented how necessary it was that the office of Treasurer should be filled, and that the board then unanimously approved of Shrewsbury.—Boyer's *Queen Anne*, p. 714. As Argyle and Somerset were Whigs, though very inconsistent ones, Mr. Wyon thinks the appointment was made before their arrival. It appears, however, that after the episode relating to Shrewsbury the Council agreed, on the motion of Argyle and Somerset, to summon all Privy Councillors in or near London without distinction of party, and that it was then only that Somers and other Whig statesmen appeared on the scene (Boyer, 714-715). This is, probably, all that was meant by Ford when he describes the appointment of Shrewsbury as having taken place before the arrival of the Whigs. Lord Stanhope, however, is mistaken in saying that the appointment was suggested by the two intruding dukes. Iberville, who had good means of information, corroborates the assertion that Argyle and Somerset appeared unsummoned at the Council. With reference to the appointment of Shrewsbury he only says, 'Aussitôt que la Reine avoit repris connoissance le conseil avoit proposé de faire M. le Duc de Shrewsbury Grand Trésorier, ce qu'elle fit de bon cœur. Il ne faut pour cela que donner la baguette, au lieu qu'il falloit une commission en chancellerie pour une nomination de commissionaires dont on n'étoit pas encore convenu, et qu'il auroit fallu bien du temps pour cela.'—Iberville to Torcy, 11 Août, 1714 (N.S.). Two days later he writes: 'On dit que c'est à la prière de my lord Bolingbroke que my lord Shrewsbury s'est determiné à accepter la charge.'—*MSS. Paris Foreign Office.*

that the coming King regarded them with complete hostility, but nothing had been organised for a restoration of the Stuarts, and there was no time or opportunity for making conditions. A deputation, headed by Bolingbroke, was sent to the dying Queen, who feebly assented to whatever was asked. Shrewsbury, who was already Chamberlain and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, became Lord Treasurer, and assumed the authority of Prime Minister. Summons were at once sent to all Privy Councillors, irrespective of party, to attend; and Somers and several others of the Whig leaders were speedily at their post. They had the great advantage of knowing clearly the policy they should pursue, and their measures were taken with admirable promptitude and energy. The guards of the Tower were at once doubled. Four regiments were ordered to march from the country to London, and all seamen to repair to their vessels. An embargo was laid on all shipping. The fleet was equipped, and speedy measures were taken to protect the seaports, and to secure tranquillity in Scotland and Ireland. At the same time despatches were sent to the Netherlands ordering seven of the ten British battalions to embark without delay; to Lord Strafford, the ambassador at the Hague, desiring the States-General to fulfil their guarantee of the Protestant succession in England; to the Elector, urging him to hasten to Holland, where on the death of the Queen he would be met by a British squadron, and escorted to his new kingdom. Marlborough, who had long oscillated between the parties, was now in the Hanoverian interest, and was hastening over to employ his influence, if necessary, with the army.

The Queen remained in a condition of stupor, broken by a few faint intervals of consciousness, till the morning of the 1st, when she died. On the 30th July Stanhope had written to the Emperor Charles VI. informing him of her sudden illness, and he predicted that if her death was postponed only for a few weeks the Protestant succession would be in grave danger.[1] The feelings of Bolingbroke may be clearly seen in his own words: 'The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday,

[1] 'Cet accident subit et imprévu est un coup de foudre pour le parti Jacobite qui n'a point pris de mesures pour faire réussir leur projet aussitost qu'il seroit nécessaire et j'ose assurer à votre M. I. et C. que si les médecins ont deviné juste Mgr. L'Electeur d'Hanovre sera proclamé Roy et pren-

the Queen died on Sunday! What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!'[1]

The new King was at once proclaimed, and it is a striking proof of the danger of the crisis that the funds, which had fallen on a false rumour of the Queen's recovery, rose at once when she died.[2] Atterbury is said to have urged Bolingbroke to proclaim James III. at Charing Cross, and to have offered to head the procession in his lawn sleeves, but the counsel was mere madness, and Bolingbroke saw clearly that any attempt to overthrow the Act of Settlement would be now worse than useless. He had assented to all measures for the security of the succession which had been taken in the last Council of Anne, and he cordially approved of the conduct of Iberville, who, the morning after the Queen's death, paid his official compliments to the Hanoverian minister.[3] The more violent spirits among the Jacobites now looked eagerly for a French invasion, but the calmer members of the party perceived that such an invasion was impossible, that

dra possession du Royaume aussi paisiblement que l'a fait aucun de ses prédécesseurs. Il est vray que si la maladie traînoit en longueur, quand ce ne seroit que quelques semaines nous pourrions être fort embarrassés.'—*Correspondance de Leibnitz*, iii. 504-505.

[1] Bolingbroke to Swift Aug. 3rd, 1714.—Swift's *Correspondence*.

[2] Two interesting MS. letters in the Irish State Paper Office, written by Edward Southwell to Josh. Dawson, from London immediately after the Queen's death, give a curious picture of the state of feeling: 'I attended my royal mistress to the hour of her death . . . . There is a superabundancy of joy on this occasion. The stocks rise prodigiously. The merchants expect vast commerce, the soldiers great employment, and those who have been out all the employments of those who are in.' 'Thank God, everything is very quiet, but the joy of the City of London is very peculiar, for the stocks sank as the news came from Kensington that her Majesty was like to recover, and rose as her case grew more desperate.' See, too, Ford to Swift (July 31, 1714), Swift's *Correspondence*. Iberville wrote to the French King: 'La tranquillité qu'on voit icy sans aucune apparence qu'il y ait le moindre mouvement en faveur du Chevalier, a fait hausser de sept à huit pour cent les actions sur les fonds publics.'—Aug. 13 (N.S.).

[3] Iberville to the French King, Aug. 13 (N.S.). Iberville adds: 'Il [Bolingbroke] croit que V. M. doit éviter avec grand soin la moindre démonstration en faveur du Chevalier qui pust fournir un prétexte aux Whigs de recommencer la guerre. Tous les gens sensez sans excepter les Jacobites declarez, en conviennent, même pour l'intérêt du Chevalier dont ils craignent une fin malheureuse, s'il se hazardoit légèrement sur la parole de certaines gens qu'ils traitent d'aventuriers, zèlés à la vérité, mais sans teste.' In one of his letters to Torcy on the 11th he said, 'La teste tourne à la plupart des Jacobites, surtout des Ecossais. Ils se figurent que le Roi va fournir au Chevalier ce qu'il faut pour passer en Ecosse et y soutenir la guerre et quand on leur dit que sa Majesté ne le pourroit sans contrevenir aux traités de paix et s'attirer sur les bras une nouvelle guerre ils répondent que le Chevalier est perdu pour jamais et que nous n'en serons pas plus exempts de la guerre.' MSS. Paris Foreign Office.

a Jacobite expedition unsupported by French arms would be entirely hopeless, and that the true policy of the Tory party was to abstain from every demonstration that savoured of Jacobitism. The calm of the city at this critical moment was very remarkable. Oxford was, it is true, insulted in the streets, but there was no serious disorder, and the guard which, as a measure of precaution, had been placed before the French Embassy was speedily withdrawn. The Regency Act of 1705 came at once into operation. The Hanoverian minister produced the sealed list of the names of those to whom the Elector entrusted the government before his arrival, and it was found to consist of eighteen names taken from the leaders of the Whig party, omitting, however, Somers, who was a confirmed invalid, and Marlborough, who was still profoundly distrusted by the Hanoverian party. Parliament, in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, was at once summoned, and it was soon evident that there was nothing to fear. The moment for a restoration was past, and the one object of the Tory party was now to proclaim their adhesion to the dynasty, and if possible to avoid proscription.[1] Dutiful addresses were unanimously voted. The Tories tried to win the favour of the new King by proposing that the Civil List which had been 700,000*l.* under Anne, should be raised to a million, but the danger of so extravagant an augmentation was felt and the former sum was voted. The arrears due to the Hanoverian troops were paid. A reward of 100,000*l.* was offered for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he attempted to land. That prince, on the news of the death of Anne, had hastened to Paris, but by this time a powerful fleet protected the English coast. The Jacobite party was unorganised or paralysed; the large class who dreaded beyond all things civil war, now supported the Government; the French were not prepared to draw the sword, and at the request of Torcy the Stuart Prince returned to

[1] Bolingbroke seems to have hoped for a time to attract the new King to his party. He wrote to Swift (Aug. 3), 'The Tories seem to resolve not to be crushed, and that is enough to prevent them from being so. . . . The Whigs are a pack of Jacobites; that shall be the cry in a month if you please.'—Swift's *Correspondence*.

On the 7th Erasmus Lewis wrote to Swift, 'We are gaping and staring to see who is to rule us. The Whigs think they shall engross all. We think we shall have our share.'—*Ibid.*

Lorraine. He issued a proclamation deploring 'the death of the Princess our sister, of whose good intentions towards us we could not for some time past well doubt, and this was the reason we then sate still, expecting the good effects thereof, which were unfortunately prevented by her deplorable death.'

It was in this manner that, contrary to all reasonable expectations, this great change was effected without bloodshed, and almost without difficulty. The King, either from policy or indifference, did not appear in England till September 18, when he was received with no opposition, and with some applause. Those who hoped that he might share his favours between both parties were speedily undeceived. Even before his landing, Bolingbroke was deprived of the office of Secretary of State, which he still held, in a manner of positive insult. Lord Townshend, the author of the barrier treaty, was appointed to the place, and he soon assumed the rank of Prime Minister. Ormond was not permitted to come into the King's presence. Oxford was made to undergo the most marked slights, and a Whig ministry was speedily formed. Townshend, Stanhope, Sunderland, Cowper, Marlborough, Nottingham, and Argyle filled the chief places, while Walpole, who was rising rapidly to the foremost rank among the young Whigs, became Paymaster-General, and Pulteney, who afterwards became his greatest rival, was Secretary at war. Shrewsbury, whose services in the crisis had been so transcendent, but who had been deeply implicated in the Peace of Utrecht, retained the office of Lord Chamberlain, but resigned those of Treasurer and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and it was observed that, though Marlborough became Commander-in-Chief, his power was always carefully restricted, and that the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which was regarded as a dignified banishment, was reserved for his son-in-law Sunderland. The Parliament, according to law, determined in six months after the decease of the sovereign; and at the election that ensued the influence of the Crown was thrown unscrupulously into the scale of the Whigs. An extraordinary Royal Proclamation was issued reflecting on the evil designs of men disaffected to the King, noticing the perplexity of public affairs, the interruption of commerce, and the grievous miscarriages of the late Government, and urging the electors, in

their choice of members, 'to have a particular regard to such as showed a firmness to the Protestant succession when it was in danger.' In the face of such a proclamation, emanating from the sovereign himself, a Tory Parliament would have been a direct incentive to civil war. The Government exerted all its powers over the electors. An immense Whig majority was returned, and the Parliament which assembled in the beginning of 1715 formed the commencement of that long period of Whig ascendancy, which continued without intermission till the accession of George III.

CHAPTER II.

It has been my object in the last chapter to show that the triumph of the Whig policy, which was effected by the Revolution, and confirmed by the accession of the House of Brunswick, was the triumph of the party which was naturally the weakest in England. Several isolated political events contributed to the result, but the chief causes were the superiority of the smaller party in energy, intelligence, concentration, and organisation, and the division and partial paralysis of the larger party, arising from the accidental conflict between the cause of legitimacy and the cause of Protestantism. Before proceeding to relate the methods by which the Whig power was consolidated, and the manner in which it was used, it will be necessary to examine the chief elements of which it was composed, and the causes of its political bias. Its strength lay in three quarters—the aristocracy, the commercial classes, and the Nonconformists.

The eminently popular character of the English aristocracy is of a very early date, and it has probably done more than any other single cause to determine the type and ensure the permanence of English freedom. The position of the Norman nobility in England had always been widely different from that of the same nobility at home, William being able to withhold in the one case important privileges he was compelled to recognise in the other; and a long conflict, in which the nobles, in alliance with the Commons, were struggling against the power of the monarchy, contributed, with other causes, to give a popular bias to the former. The great charter had been won by the barons, but, instead of being confined to a demand for new aristocratical privileges, it guaranteed the legal rights of all freemen, and the ancient customs and liberties of cities,

prohibited every kind of arbitrary punishment, compelled the barons to grant their subvassals mitigations of feudal burdens similar to those which they themselves obtained from the King, and even accorded special protection to foreign merchants in England. Philip de Comines had noticed as a remarkable fact the singular humanity of the nobles to the people during the civil wars. In these wars the nobility were almost annihilated, and as they were but little increased during the reign of Henry VII., the revival of the order in numbers and wealth dates in a great measure from the innovating and liberal movement of the Reformation. The Puritan rebellion was chiefly democratic, but the Revolution of 1688 was chiefly aristocratic; and while the reforms of the former were soon swept away, and its excesses followed by a long reaction towards despotism, the latter founded on a secure basis the liberties of England. Although Stuart creations had raised the temporal peerage from 59 to about 150,—although the introduction of Scotch peers at the Union, and the simultaneous creation of twelve Tory peers by Harley, had impaired the liberalism of the Upper House,—still from the time of the Revolution to the reign of George III. the Whig party almost always preponderated in it, and contained the families of the greatest influence and dignity. The House of Lords threw its shelter successively over Somers and Walpole when the House of Commons was ready to sacrifice them. By its strenuous opposition to the encroachments of the House of Commons it secured for electors in 1704 the all-important right of defending a disputed qualification before an impartial legal tribunal. It delayed or mitigated the persecuting legislation directed under Anne against the Dissenters. It steadily upheld the Protestant succession at the period of its greatest peril, and during the long Whig rule of Walpole and the Pelhams it not only gave the Government a secure majority in one House, but also, by the influence of the peers over the small boroughs, contributed very largely to the majority in the other.

The causes of the liberal tendencies that have so broadly distinguished the English nobility from those of most other countries are to be found not only in the traditions of its early history, but also in the constitution of the order. In most Con-

tinental countries an aristocracy has a tendency to become an isolated and at length an enervated caste, removed from the sympathies and occupations, and opposed to the interests, of the community at large, despising, and, therefore, discrediting, all active occupations except those of a soldier, and thus connecting in the minds of men the idea of social rank with that of an idle and frivolous life. But in England the interests of the nobles as a class, have been carefully and indissolubly interwoven with those of the people. They have never claimed for themselves any immunity from taxation. Their sons, except the eldest, have descended, after one or two generations, into the ranks of the commoners. Their eldest sons, before obtaining their titles, have usually made it a great object of their ambition to sit in the House of Commons, and have there acquired the tastes of popular politics. In the public school system the peers and the lower gentry are united in the closest ties. The intermarriage of peers and commoners has always been legal and common. A constant stream of lawyers of brilliant talents, but often of humble birth, has poured into the Upper House, which is presided over by one of them; and the purely hereditary character of the body has been still further qualified by the introduction of the bishops.

Not less distinctive and remarkable is the influence which the aristocracy in England has exercised on the estimate of labour. One of the chief ends of the whole social organisation is to develop to the highest point and apply to the greatest advantage the sum of talent existing in the community. In its first rudimentary stage Government accomplishes this end chiefly in a negative way, by discharging those police functions without which there can be no peaceful labour; but with the increased elaboration of society it becomes apparent that the Legislature can in two distinct ways directly and very powerfully assist the development. The first of these ways is by supplying opportunities for the exercise of talent which would otherwise be lost. There is at every period latent among poor men a large amount of special talent of the highest value which cannot be elicited without a long and expensive process of cultivation, or which, when elicited, is of a kind that would produce no pecuniary results at all commensurate with its importance, and which

would, therefore, in the natural course of things, either remain wholly uncultivated, or be diverted to lower but more lucrative channels. It is one of the most useful functions of government to provide means by which poor men who exhibit some special aptitude may be brought within the reach of an appropriate education; and it is one of the most important advantages of many institutions that they supply requisite spheres for the expansion of certain casts of intellect, and adequate rewards for pursuits which are of great value to the community, but which if left to the unassisted operation of the law of supply and demand would remain wholly, or in a great degree, unremunerative.

The manner in which this function of government has been executed is a subject to which I shall hereafter revert. At present, however, my object is to notice a second way in which legislation may assist intellectual development. If much talent is wasted on account of want of opportunities, much also is unemployed for want of incentives. It is not a natural or in most countries a common thing for those large classes who possess all the means of enjoyment and luxury, who have the world before them to choose from, and who have never known the pressure of want or of necessity, to devote themselves to long, painful, and plodding drudgery, to incur all the responsibilities, anxiety, calumny, ingratitude, and bondage of public life. If in the case of men of extraordinary ability the path of ambition may be itself sufficiently attractive, it is not naturally so to rich men of little more than average talent. On the other hand, the forms of useful labour which are unremunerative to the labourer are so numerous, the force of the example of the higher classes is so great, the advantages of independent circumstances for the prosecution of many kinds of labour are so inestimable, and in public life especially, such circumstances assist men so powerfully in resisting the most fatal temptations, that the existence of laborious tastes and habits among the richer classes is of the utmost value to the community. The legislation which can produce them will not only add directly to the amount of active talent, but will also set the whole current of society aright, and generate in the higher classes a moral influence that sooner or later will permeate all.

The indissoluble connection of the enjoyment and the dignity of property with the discharge of public duties was the pre-eminent merit of feudalism, and it is one of the special excellences of English institutions that they have in a great measure preserved this connection, notwithstanding the necessary dissolution of the feudal system. This achievement has been the result of more than one agency, and of the accumulated traditions of many generations. The formation of an unpaid magistracy, and the great governing duties thrown upon the House of Lords, combined with the vast territorial possessions and the country tastes of the upper classes, have made the gratuitous discharge of judicial, legislative, and administrative functions the natural accompaniment of a considerable social position, while the retrospective habits which an aristocracy creates perpetuate and intensify the feelings of an honourable ambition. The memory of great ancestors, and the desire not to suffer a great name to fade, become an incentive of the most powerful kind. A point of honour conducive to exertion is created, and men learn to associate the idea of active patriotic labour with that of the social condition they deem most desirable. A body of men is thus formed who, with circumstances peculiarly favourable for the successful prosecution of important unremunerative labours, combine dispositions and habits eminently laborious, and who have at the same time an unrivalled power of infusing by their example a love of labour into the whole community.

The importance of the influence thus exercised will scarcely, I think, be overlooked by those who will remember on the one hand, how many great nations and how many long periods have been almost destitute of developed talent, and, on the other hand, how very little evidence we have of the existence of any great difference in respect to innate ability between different nations or ages. The amount of realised talent in a community depends mainly on the circumstances in which it is placed, and, above all, upon the disposition that animates it. It depends upon the force and direction that have been given to its energies, upon the nature of its ambitions, upon its conception and standard of dignity. In all large classes who have great opportunities, and, at the same time, great temptations, there will

be innumerable examples of men who neglect the former and yield to the latter; but it can hardly, I think, be denied that in no other country has so large an amount of salutary labour been gratuitously accomplished by the upper classes as in England; and in the present day, at least, aristocratic influence in English legislation is chiefly to be traced in the number of offices that are either not at all or insufficiently paid. The impulse which was first given in the sphere of public life has gradually extended through many others, and in addition to many statesmen, orators, or soldiers,—in addition to many men who have exhibited an admirable administrative skill in the management of vast properties and the improvement of numerous dependants, the English aristocracy has been extremely rich in men who, as poets, historians, art critics, linguists, philologists, antiquaries, or men of science, have attained a great, or, at least, a respectable eminence. The peers in England have been specially connected with two classes. They are the natural representatives of the whole body of country gentlemen, while, from their great wealth and their town lives, they are intimately connected with that important and rapidly increasing class who have amassed or inherited large fortunes from commerce or manufactures, whose politics during the early Hanoverian period they steadily represented. It will be found, I think, that the House of Lords, even when most Tory, has been more liberal than the first class, and has produced in proportion to its numbers more political talent than the latter.

In this manner it appears that the existence of a powerful aristocracy, and the political functions with which it is invested cannot be regarded as isolated facts. They are connected with that whole condition of society which in England has always thrown on the upper classes the chief political leadership of the country, and as such they open out questions of the gravest kind. No maxim in politics is more certain than that, whenever a single class possesses a monopoly or an overwhelming preponderance of power, it will end by abusing it. Whatever may be the end of morals, 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' is undoubtedly the rule of politics, and a system of government which throws all power into the hands of

one class, of the smallest class, and of the richest class, is assuredly not calculated to promote it. But it is one thing to give a class a monopoly of political power; it is quite another thing to entrust it, under the restrictions of a really popular government, with the chief share of active administration. A structure of society like that of England which brings the upper class into such political prominence that they usually furnish the popular candidates for election, has at least the advantage of saving the nation from that government by speculators, adventurers, and demagogues which is the gravest of all the evils to which representative institutions are liable. When the suffrage is widely extended, a large proportion of electors will always be wholly destitute of political convictions, while every artifice is employed to mislead them. Under such circumstances it is very possible—in many countries it is even very probable—that the supreme management of affairs may pass into the hands of men who are perfectly unprincipled, who seek only for personal aggrandisement or personal notoriety, who have no real stake in the country, and who are perfectly reckless of its future and its permanent interests. It would be difficult to exaggerate the dangers that may result from even a short period of such rule, and they have often driven nations to take refuge from their own representatives in the arms of despotism. The disposal of the national revenue may pass into the hands of mere swindlers, and become the prey of simple malversation. The foreign policy of the country may be directed by men who seek only for notoriety or for the consolidation of their tottering power, and who with these views plunge the nation into wars that lead speedily to national ruin. In home politics institutions which are lost in the twilight of a distant past may, through similar motives, in a few months be recklessly destroyed. Nearly all great institutions are the growth of centuries; their first rise is slow, obscure, undemonstrative, they have been again and again modified, recast, and expanded; their founders leave no reputation, and reap no harvest from their exertions. On the other hand, the destruction of a great and ancient institution is an eminently dramatic thing, and no other political achievement usually produces so much noisy reputation in proportion to the ability it requires. The catastrophe (however long preparing) is con-

centrated in a short time, and the name of the man who effects it is immortalised. As a great writer[1] has finely said, 'When the oak is felled, the whole forest echoes with its fall, but a hundred acorns are sown in silence by an unnoticed breeze.' Hence to minds ambitious only of notoriety, careless of the permanent interests of the nation, and destitute of all real feeling of political responsibility, a policy of mere destruction possesses an irresistible attraction.

From these extreme evils a country is for the most part saved by entrusting the management of its affairs chiefly to the upper classes of the community. A government of gentlemen may be and often is extremely deficient in intelligence, in energy, in sympathy with the poorer classes. It may be shamefully biassed by class interests, and guilty of great corruption in the disposal of patronage, but the standard of honour common to the class at least secures it from the grosser forms of malversation, and the interests of its members are indissolubly connected with the permanent well-being of the country. Such men may be guilty of much misgovernment, and they will certainly, if uncontrolled by other classes, display much selfishness, but it is scarcely possible that they should be wholly indifferent to the ultimate consequences of their acts, or should divest themselves of all sense of responsibility or public duty. When other things are equal, the class which has most to lose and least to gain by dishonesty will exhibit the highest level of integrity. When other things are equal, the class whose interests are most permanently and seriously bound up with those of the nation is likely to be the most careful guardian of the national welfare. When other things are equal, the class which has most leisure and most means of instruction will, as a whole, be the most intelligent. Besides this, the tact, the refinement, the reticence, the conciliatory tone of thought and manner characteristic of gentlemen are all peculiarly valuable in public men, whose chief task is to reconcile conflicting pretensions and to harmonise jarring interests. Nor is it a matter of slight importance to the political life of a nation, or to the estimate in which a nation is held by its neighbours, that its government should be in the

[1] Carlyle.

hands of men on whom no class can look down. Rightly or wrongly, nations are judged mainly by their politicians and by their political acts, and when these have ceased to command respect, the character of a nation in the world is speedily lowered.

To these advantages, arising indirectly from the intervention of an hereditary aristocracy in government, others may be added. In the first place such an aristocracy exists, and, rightly or wrongly, attracts to itself among great multitudes of men a warm feeling of reverence and even of affection. It is the part of wise statesmen—and it is one of the characteristics by which such men are distinguished from crude theorists—to avail themselves for the purposes of government of all those strong, enduring, and unreasoning attachments which tradition, associations, or other causes have generated. Such are, the sentiment of loyalty, the respect for religion, the homage paid to rank. These feelings endear government to the people, counteract any feeling of repulsion the sacrifices it exacts might produce, give it that permanence, security, and stability which are essential to the well-being of society. Sometimes, no doubt, the reverential, or conservative elements have an excessive force, and form an obstacle to progress; but that they should exist, and under some form be the basis of the national character, is the essential condition of all permanent good government. A state of society in which revolution is always imminent is disastrous alike to moral, political, and material interests, and it is much less a reasoning conviction than unreasoning sentiments of attachment that enable Governments to bear the strain of occasional maladministration, revolutionary panics, and seasons of calamity.[1]

These considerations may be carried a step farther. All civic virtue, all the heroism and self-sacrifice of patriotism spring ultimately from the habit men acquire of regarding their nation as a great organic whole, identifying themselves with its fortunes in the past as in the present, and looking forward anxiously to its future destinies. When the members of any nation have come to regard their country as nothing more than

[1] See on this subject a noble passage, full of profound wisdom, in Lord Russell's *Essay on the English Constitution*, pp. 271–272.

the plot of ground on which they reside, and their Government as a mere organisation for providing police or contracting treaties; when they have ceased to entertain any warmer feelings for one another than those which private interest, or personal friendship, or a mere general philanthropy, may produce, the moral dissolution of that nation is at hand. Even in the order of material interests the well-being of each generation is in a great degree dependent upon the forbearance, self-sacrifice, and providence of those who have preceded it, and civic virtues can never flourish in a generation which thinks only of itself. 'Those will not look forward to their posterity who never look backwards to their ancestors.'[1] To kindle and sustain the vital flame of national sentiment is the chief moral end of national institutions, and while it cannot be denied that it has been attained under the most various forms of government, it is equally certain that an aristocracy which is at once popular and hereditary, which blends and assimilates itself with the general interests of the present, while it perpetuates and honours the memories of the past, is peculiarly fitted to foster it.

Another advantage which should not be neglected in a review of the effects of aristocratic institutions is their tendency to bring young men into active political life. In politics, as in most other professions, early training is of extreme importance, and in a country where government is conducted mainly through the instrumentality of Parliament, this training, to be really efficient, must include an early practice of parliamentary duties. A young man of energy and industry, possessing the tact and manners of good society, and endowed with abilities slightly superior to those of the average of men, is likely, if brought into parliamentary and official life between 20 and 30, to acquire a skill in the conduct of public business rarely attained even by men of great genius whose minds and characters have been formed in other spheres, and who have come late into the arena of Parliament. The presence in Parliament of a certain number of young politicians, from whom the lower offices of administration may be filled, and who may gradually rise to the foremost places, is an essential

[1] Burke.

condition of the well-being of constitutional government, and it is one of the conditions which, since the abolition of the nomination boroughs, it has become most difficult to attain. Popular election is in this respect exceedingly worthless. It may be trusted to create, with a rough but substantial justice, a representation of public opinion. It may be trusted, but much less perfectly, to secure some recognition of old services and of matured genius, but an extended constituency has neither the capacity nor the desire to discover undeveloped talent, or to recognise the promise of future excellence. Hardly any other feature of our parliamentary system appears so ominous to a thoughtful observer as the growing exclusion of young men from the House of Commons, and if a certain number are still found within its walls, this is mainly due to that aristocratic sentiment which makes the younger members of noble families the favourite candidates with many constituencies.

There are other consequences which it will be sufficient simply to enumerate. The existence of a powerful, independent, and connected class, carrying with it a dignity, and in many respects an influence, fully equal to that of the servants of the Crown, has more than once proved the most formidable obstacle to the encroachments of despotism; while, on the other hand, in democratic times this hierarchy of ranks serves to mitigate the isolation of the throne, and is thus a powerful bulwark to monarchy. A second chamber is so essential to the healthy working of constitutional government that it may almost be pronounced a political necessity; and in times when the position of that chamber is a secondary one, when its leading functions are merely to delay and to revise, it is no small advantage that it should be composed of men possessing, indeed, great local knowledge and influence, but at the same time independent of local intrigues and jealousies, and of the transient bursts of popular passion. A permanent hereditary chamber has at least a tendency to impart to national policy that character of continuity and stability, and to infuse into its discussions that judicial spirit which it is most difficult to preserve amid the rapid fluctuations and the keen contests of popular government. It may even very materially contribute to make legislation a reflex of the popular will. No matter how per-

fect may be the system of election, an elected body can never represent with complete fidelity the political sentiments of the community. In particular constituencies purely local and personal considerations continually falsify the political verdict. In the country at large a general election usually turns on a single great party issue, or on the comparative popularity of rival statesmen, and hardly a year passes in which the politicians in whom, on the whole, the nation has most confidence do not act on some particular question in a manner opposed to the national sentiment. If the question is a subordinate one, this divergence does not make the country desire a change of ministry; and it is extremely difficult, under the system of party government, to enforce by any less violent means the national will. Under these circumstances a body such as the House of Lords, exempt from the necessity of popular election, representing at the same time most of the forms of public opinion, and exercising in the constitution a kind of revising, judicial, and moderating office, is of great utility; it is able to arrest or retard a particular course of policy, without producing a ministerial crisis, and it may thus be said, without a paradox, to contribute to the representative character of the government. Besides this, the peerage enables the country to avail itself of the talents of statesmen of ability and experience, who are physically incapable of enduring the fatigue inseparable from the position of a minister in the Lower House; it forms a cheap yet highly prized reward for great services to the nation or the Crown; and it exercises in some respects a considerable refining influence upon the manners of society by counteracting the empire of mere wealth, and sustaining that order of feelings and sentiments which constitutes the conception of a gentleman. Nor should we altogether disregard its minor uses in settling doubtful questions of precedence, and marking out the natural leaders for many movements, which would otherwise be weakened by conflicting claims and by personal jealousies.

There are, no doubt, serious drawbacks to these benefits. No human institution is either an unmitigated good or an unmitigated evil; and the main task of every statesman and of every sound political thinker is to weigh with impartiality the good and evil consequences that arise out of each. Considered

abstractedly, every institution is an evil which teaches men to estimate their fellows not according to their moral and intellectual worth, but by an unreal and factitious standard. The worship of baubles and phantasms necessarily perverts the moral judgment, nor can anyone who is acquainted with English society doubt that in this respect the evil of aristocratic institutions is deeply felt in every grade. Their moral effects are, on the whole, more doubtful than their political effects, and the servile and sycophantic dispositions, the vulgarity of thought and feeling they tend to foster in the community form the most serious counterpoise to their undoubted advantages. These evils, however, lie far too deep for mere political remedies; and when the worship of rank and the worship of wealth are in competition it may, at least, be said that the existence of the two idols diminishes by dividing the force of each superstition, and that the latter evil is an increasing one, while the former is never again likely to be a danger. The injurious effects of aristocratic influence may, however, be abundantly traced in the desire to aggregate the vast preponderance of family property in a single heir, which is often displayed in England to an extent that is an outrage upon morality; in the frequent spectacle of many children—often daughters, who are almost incapable of earning a livelihood —reduced to penury, in order that the eldest son may gratify the family vanity by an adequate display of ostentatious luxury; in the scandalous injustice of the law relating to intestacy. Although it would be an absurd exaggeration to attribute to the existence of an aristocracy the frightful contrast of extreme opulence and abject misery which is so frequent in England, it is undoubtedly true that the excessive inequality of the distribution of wealth, resulting from laws which were originally intended to secure the preponderance of a class, and from manners which were originally the product of those laws, has most seriously aggravated it. The laws have for the most part passed away, but the habits that grew out of them remain, and they operate over a far larger circle than that of the aristocracy. Great as is the use of the peerage in sustaining public spirit in the nation, it is unquestionable that the passion for founding families which it produces, dimi-

nishes largely the flow of private munificence to public objects, and its value in promoting laborious habits is in some degree counteracted by its manifest tendency to depress the purely intellectual classes. Rank is much less local in its influence than wealth, and wherever a powerful aristocracy exists, it overshadows intellectual eminence, and becomes its successful rival in most forms of national competition. The political advantages of an hereditary chamber are very great, but the power of unlimited veto resting in such a chamber is a grave anomaly in a free government. Nor is it one of those anomalies which are merely theoretical. On great questions on which popular passions are violently aroused, the spirit of compromise and political sagacity so general among the upper classes in England, may usually be counted on to prevent serious collisions; and the power of creating an unlimited number of peers provides in the last resort an extreme, dangerous, but efficient remedy. There are, however, many questions on which the national judgment is plainly pronounced, but which from their nature do not appeal to any strong passions, and on these the obstructive power of the House of Lords has sometimes proved very mischievous. More than one measure of reform has thus been rejected through several successive Parliaments, in spite of unbroken and repeated majorities in the Lower House.

Looking again at the question from a purely historical standing-point, it is certain that the politicians of the Upper House were deeply tainted with the treachery and duplicity common to most English statesmen between the Restoration and the American Revolution. Most of the Bills for preventing corrupt influence in the Commons during the administration of Walpole were crushed by the influence of the minister in the House of Lords. The country was long seriously burdened, and some of the professions were systematically degraded, in order to furnish lucrative posts for the younger members of the aristocratic families; and the representative character of the Lower House was so utterly perverted by the multiplication of nomination boroughs in the hands of the peers that a storm of indignation was at last raised which shook the very pillars of the constitution. Still, even in these respects, the English

nobility form a marked contrast to those of the Continent. Though rank has in England almost always brought with it a very disproportionate weight, although it is undoubtedly true that in the last years of George II. and in the first years of George III. three or four aristocratic families threatened to control the efficient power in the State, yet, on the whole, no other aristocracy has shown itself so free from the spirit of monopoly. In the great Whig period, from the Revolution till the death of Walpole, there were numerous instances of statesmen who were not of noble birth taking a foremost place in English politics.[1] The names of Somers, Montague, Churchill, Addison, Craggs, and many others will at once occur to the reader, and the most powerful leader of this age was a simple country gentleman, a member of the House of Commons, who was so far from allowing himself to be the puppet of anyone, that one of the chief faults of his administration was his extreme reluctance to part with the smallest share of the influence of the Government. The steady support which the Whig House of Lords gave to Walpole during every stage of his career is a decisive proof not only of its enlightenment but also of its moderation. Nor is this less true of the opposite party. No Tory minister has had so absolute an authority as William Pitt, and in the period of the darkest and most bigoted Toryism the House of Lords was governed with an almost absolute sway by the knowledge and the ability of Eldon. If the nomination boroughs were perverted, as they undoubtedly were to a very large extent, to the most selfish purposes, it is also true that there was sufficient public spirit among their proprietors to induce them to bring into the House of Commons a far larger proportion of young men of promise and genius than have ever, under any other system, entered its walls. If the numerous Tory creations of George III. at last altered the spirit of the body, it should at least not be forgotten that the old tradition never was extinct, that in the

[1] This has been noticed by Swift, in a very remarkable paper on the Decline of the Political Influence of the Nobility, in the *Intelligencer*, No. 9. He declares that 'for above sixty years past the chief conduct of affairs hath been generally placed in new men, with few exceptions.' He ascribes this chiefly to the defective education of the upper classes. Swift was, I believe, wrong, in imagining that aristocratic influence had declined.

great struggle of the Reform Bill some of the chief aristocratic borough-owners were among the foremost advocates of the people, and that the large majority of the peers of an older creation than George III. were on the same side,[1] while the most obstinate opponents of progress found their leaders in Eldon and Lyndhurst, who had but lately risen from the ranks.

There was, however, one marked exception to the general tenor of aristocratic politics. One attempt was made, which, if it had been successful, would have converted the English nobility into a separate caste. I allude, of course, to the Peerage Bill, which was introduced by the ministry of Sunderland and Stanhope, in 1719, and which was, perhaps, the most dangerous constitutional innovation since the Revolution. It was inspired by the party interest of the Whigs, and it was intended to prevent the son of George I., who was in opposition to his father, from overthrowing, if he came to the throne, the Whig majority in the Upper House by the creation of Tory peers. Had it been carried, it would have made the House of Lords an almost unchangeable body, entirely beyond the control of King or Minister or Commons. It provided that, with the exception of members of the Royal Family, the sovereign should at no time be allowed to add more than six to the number of the English hereditary peers existing when the Bill was passed; though, whenever a peerage became extinct, he might make a creation to replace it; and also that twenty-five Scotch peers, selected in the first instance by the sovereign and afterwards sitting by hereditary right, should be substituted for the sixteen elective peers. It is obvious that such a measure would have given the peerage all the characteristics of a close corporation, would have prevented that influx into its ranks of legal, political, and commercial talent which now constitutes one of its most distinctive merits, would have in consequence destroyed its value as a reward of genius, and its weight as a representative body, and would have abolished the only means which the constitution provides for overcoming, in extreme cases, the opposition of the Lords. Yet this Bill was introduced by the party which is the natural guardian of the popular

[1] Molesworth's *Hist. of England*, i. 203.

element in the constitution, and it had at first considerable prospect of success. The King readily relinquished his prerogative of unlimited creation. The indignation excited by the lavish creations of Harley in 1712 was largely made use of. The pen of Addison was enlisted in the cause. The Bill appealed at once to the party spirit of the Whigs, who designed to perpetuate their ascendancy, and to the class feeling of the peers, who desired, by preventing new creations, to increase their consequence; and it was carried without difficulty through the Lords. Fortunately, however, a great storm of indignation was soon aroused. Steele, whose judgment it is the custom of some writers invariably to decry, employed all his talent in exposing the dangers of the scheme, and his essays, though they destroyed his friendship with Addison, and brought down upon his head the prompt vengeance of the Government,[1] were of immense service to the real interests of the country. Walpole, who was at this time in opposition, both spoke and wrote against the Bill with consummate power. The jealousy of the country gentry was aroused when they saw the portals of the Upper House about to close for ever against them; and the Bill was lost in the Commons by 269 to 177.

This, however, was but a passing aberration; and it was due much more to party interest than to aristocratic exclusiveness. In general, the services of the peers to the cause of civil and religious liberty, at the time we are considering, were incontestable, and the advantage of an Upper House in this portion of our history can scarcely be questioned by anyone who regards the Revolution, and the principles it established, as good. Its members formed, perhaps, the most important section of the Whig party, for they were at this time almost at the acme of their influence. The overshadowing majesty of the Church had been broken at the Reformation. The monarchy had been seriously restricted by the Revolution, and the great democratic agencies of modern times were still in their infancy. In

[1] He had obtained a patent for the theatre of Drury Lane, but as soon as he opposed the Government scheme the Lord Chamberlain revoked his licence for acting plays, and thus reduced him to complete ruin. See Montgomery's *Life of Steele*, ii. 210-216. Few writers of the eighteenth century have received harder measure from modern critics than Steele. I must except, however, the essay on his life in Forster's *Biographical Essays*.

opulence the nobles were altogether unrivalled. The Indian nabobs, whose great fortunes in some degree competed with them, only came into prominence in the reign of George III., and the great commercial fortunes belong chiefly to a still later period. The numerous sinecures at their disposal secured the nobility a preponderance both of wealth and influence; the tone of manners before the introduction of railways was far more favourable than at present for a display of the pomp and the pretensions of rank; and the borough system gave the great families a commanding influence in the Lower House.

In addition to the aristocracy, the Whigs could usually count upon the warm support of the moneyed classes and of the Dissenters, who in this, as in most other periods, were very closely united. The country, it has been justly said, always represents the element of permanence, and the towns the element of progress. In the former the national spirit is usually the most intense, and the force of tradition, prejudice, and association most supreme. New ideas, on the other hand, appear most quickly, and circulate most easily, in the crowded centres of population; and the habits of industrial speculation, the migratory nature of capital, and the contact with many nations and with many creeds resulting from commercial intercourse, tend to sever, both for good and for ill, the chain of tradition. At the time of the Reformation the towns were the strongholds of Protestantism, at the time of the Commonwealth they were the strongholds of Puritanism, and in the Hanoverian, as in most subsequent periods, of liberal politics. On religious questions this bias has been especially strong. It is an ingenious, and, I believe, a just remark of Sir W. Petty that 'trade is most vigorously carried on in every state and government by the heterodox part of the same, and such as profess opinions different from what are publicly established.'[1] The fact may be ascribed partly, as I have said, to the superior accessibility of the town populations to new and innovating ideas, and partly also to persecuting laws which divorced heretics from the soil, and led them to seek forms of industry of which the fruits in seasons of trial can be easily realised and displaced.

[1] *Political Arithmetic*, p. 118.

The result has been that religious persecution has usually fallen with a peculiar severity upon commercial interests; and in the two centuries that followed the Reformation hardly any other single circumstance affected so powerfully the relative industrial position of nations as the degrees in which they conceded religious toleration. Among the less noticed consequences of the Reformation, perhaps the most important was the dispersion of industry produced by the many thousands of skilled artisans who were driven by persecution beyond their national borders, carrying with them trades which had hitherto been strictly or mainly local, and planting them wherever they settled. Nor was this the only result of the migration. Men who are prepared to abandon friends and country rather than forsake a religion which is not that of their nation are usually superior to the average of their fellow-countrymen in intelligence, and are almost always greatly superior to them in strength and nobility of character. Religious persecution, by steadily weeding out such men from a community, slowly but surely degrades the national type, while a policy of toleration which attracts refugees representing the best moral and industrial qualities of other nations is one of the most efficient of all means of expanding and improving it.

The effect of these influences on the well-being of nations has been very great. The ruin of Spain may be chiefly traced to the expulsion or extirpation of her Moorish, Jewish, and heretical subjects; and French industry, and still more French character, have never recovered the injury they received from the banishment of the most energetic and enlightened portion of the nation. By the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and by the savage persecution which immediately preceded and followed it, France probably lost upwards of a quarter of a million of her most industrious citizens;[1] and, amid the enthusiastic applause of the Catholic party, a blow was struck at her true interests, of which some of the effects may be perceived even to the present day. Bossuet, Massillon, and Fléchier,

[1] The estimates, as might be expected, vary greatly. Voltaire put the number as high as 600,000, and some writers still higher. See a collection of estimates from different writers, in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 616–620.

vied with each other in extolling the new Theodosius who had banished heresy from the land. The Chancellor Le Tellier repeated the ecstatic words of Simeon as he affixed the great seal to the Act. The Abbé Tallemand eulogised it in glowing terms in the French Academy. Madame de Sevigné wrote that no other king either had done or could do a nobler act. The brush of Le Sueur was employed to illustrate it on the walls of Versailles, and medals were struck, and a bronze statue was erected in front of the Town Hall, to commemorate the triumph of the Church. The results of that triumph may be soon told. Many of the arts and manufactures which had been for generations most distinctively French passed for ever to Holland, to Germany, or to England. Local liberties in France received their death-blow when those who most strenuously supported them were swept out of the country. The destruction of the most solid, the most modest, the most virtuous, the most generally enlightened element in the French nation prepared the way for the inevitable degradation of the national character, and the last serious bulwark was removed that might have broken the force of that torrent of scepticism and vice, which, a century later, laid prostrate, in merited ruin, both the altar and the throne.[1]

Not less conspicuous was the benefit derived by nations which pursued an opposite course. Holland, which had suffered so severely, and in so many ways, from religious intolerance under the Spanish domination, made it a main object of her policy to attract by perfect religious liberty the scattered energies of Europe[2]; and Prussia owes to the same cause not a little of her moral and industrial greatness. Twenty thousand Frenchmen, attracted to Brandenburg by the liberal encouragement of the Elector, at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, laid the foundation of the prosperity of Berlin, and

[1] Mr. Pattison, in his admirable *Life of Casaubon*, has made some striking remarks on the pre-eminence of the French Protestants in the very moral qualities in which the French nation as a whole is now most deficient.

[2] It is remarkable to find the leading English authority on trade as early as 1670, specifying among the causes of the great commercial prosperity of the Dutch, 'their toleration of different opinions in matters of religion, by reason of which many industrious people of other countries that dissent from the established government of their Church resort to them, with their

of most of the manufactures of Prussia;[1] and the later persecutions of Salzburg and Bohemia drove many thousands of Southern Germans to her soil. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, it was noticed that in Zell and Hanover French was spoken and written as purely as in Paris, and a refinement hitherto unknown began to distinguish the Northern Courts.[2] Even Russia sought to attract French energy for the development of her slumbering powers, and at the instance of the Elector of Brandenburg an imperial ukase was issued, offering liberty, settlement, and employment to the refugees.[3]

But no country owes more to her toleration than England. For nearly two centuries a steady stream of refugees, representing the best Continental types, poured into her population, blending with English life, transmitting their qualities of mind and character to English descendants, and contributing immensely to the perfection and variety of English industry. Elizabeth, though her religious opinions were very inimical to those of the Continental Protestants, with the instinct of true political genius, invariably encouraged the immigration, and, in spite of more than one remonstrance from the French sovereign, of much hatred of foreigners and Dissenters, of much jealousy of local interests and of rival trades, there was always sufficient good sense among the English rulers to maintain the toleration. For a short time, indeed, the persecuting and meddling policy of Laud threatened to overthrow it. That mischievous prelate had hardly obtained the See of Canterbury, when he ordered that those members of the foreign communities who had been born in England should be compelled to attend the Anglican Church, while the English liturgy was to be translated into Dutch and Walloon in the hope

families and estates, and after a few years' cohabitation with them become of the same common interest.'—Sir J. Child's *Discourse of Trade* (5th ed.), p. 4. On the other hand, we find the greatest Tory writer of the next generation denouncing 'the false politicks of a set of men who . . . take it into their imagination that trade can never flourish unless the country becomes a common receptacle for all nations, religions, and languages—a system only proper for small, popular States.'—Swift's *Examiner*, No. 21. See, too, his *Sentiments of a Church of England Man.*

[1] Frederick the Great (*Mœurs et Coutumes*), *Œuvres de Frèd.*, tom. i. p. 227, gives a long catalogue of the industries planted in Brandenburg by the refugees. See, too, Weiss's *Hist. des Réfugiés Français.*

[2] Kemble's *State Papers*, p. 386.

[3] Ibid. pp. 388–389.

of converting the others.[1] The civil war, however, restored the liberty of the refugees, and though they were afterwards exposed to much unpopularity and to serious riots, though, as we have seen, the Bill for the general naturalisation of foreign Protestants was repealed, they continued, far into the eighteenth century, to make England their favourite resort.

The extent and importance of the successive immigrations have hardly been appreciated by English historians. Those which were due to religious causes appear to have begun in 1567, when the news of the intended entry of Alva into the Netherlands was known, and when, as the Duchess of Parma wrote to Philip, more than 100,000 persons in a few days abandoned their country. Great numbers of them took refuge in England, and they were followed, in 1572, by a crowd of French Huguenots, who had escaped from St. Bartholomew; and in 1585, on the occasion of the sacking of Antwerp, by about a third part of the merchants and workmen of that city. A century later the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes produced a new immigration of French Protestants, variously estimated at from fifty to a hundred thousand. Several thousand Germans, chiefly from the Palatinate, came over in 1709; many others about 1732, after the persecutions in Salzburg; and towards the middle of the century a renewal of persecution in France was followed by a fresh French immigration. In this manner, the commercial classes in England were at length thoroughly pervaded by a foreign element. Spitalfields was almost wholly inhabited by French silk manufacturers. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the population of London was probably about 600,000,[2] it contained no less than thirty-five French Protestant churches.[3] Important refugee settlements were planted at Norwich, Canterbury, Sandwich, Yarmouth, Ipswich, Exeter, Bideford, and Barnstaple; and there is hardly a town in England in which their presence may not be traced. Nor were they confined to England. Great

[1] See Southerden Burn's *Hist. of Protestant Refugees in England*, pp. 15–16.

[2] Petty, in his *Political Arithmetic*, published in 1687, estimated the population of London at 696,000. Gregory King, ten years later, computed it at only 530,000. See Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 115.

[3] Smiles's *Huguenots in England*, p. 278.

numbers went over to Ireland. French Protestant churches were founded in New York and Charlestown, about 1724, and Salzburg refugees were very prominent in the colonisation of Georgia. About 1732, a colony of French Protestants settled in Edinburgh, where they introduced the manufacture of cambric. Some were incorporated in the British army, but by far the greater number were employed in manufactures, many of them in forms of industry which had been wholly unknown in England. Cloth-makers from Antwerp and Bruges, lace makers from Valenciennes, cambric makers from Cambray, glass makers from Paris, stuff weavers from Meaux, potters from Delft, shipwrights from Havre and Dieppe, silk manufacturers from Lyons and Tours, paper manufacturers from Bordeaux and Auvergne, woollen manufacturers from Sedan, and tanners from the Touraine, were all plying their industries in England. The manufactures of silk, damask, velvet, cambric and baize, of the finer kinds of cloth and paper, of pendulum clocks, mathematical instruments, felt hats, toys, crystal and plate glass, all owe their origin in England wholly or chiefly to Protestant refugees, who also laid the foundation of scientific gardening, introduced numerous flowers and vegetables that had before been unknown, and improved almost every industry that was indigenous to the soil.[1]

It is a significant fact that at the close of the seventeenth century, while the balance of political and military power in Europe was still clearly on the side of Catholicism, the supremacy of industry was as decidedly on the side of Protestantism. It was computed that Great Britain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Hanseatic towns, and the Protestant parts of Germany, possessed between them three-fourths of the commerce of the world;[2] while in France itself, before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, an extraordinary proportion of the national industry was in the hands of the Huguenots. The immigration of these latter into England had

[1] The fullest account of the refugee settlements and industry is to be found in Southerden Burn's very valuable *Hist. of the Protestant Refugees in England*. See, too, Weiss's *Hist. des Réfugiés Français*, Mr. Smiles' two interesting volumes on *The Huguenots*, and the notices of the Refugee Manufactures, in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*.

[2] Petty's *Political Arithmetic*, p. 118.

the natural effect of strengthening the Whig party both in numbers and in zeal.[1] The industrial classes, who formed the bulk of the party, were largely increased. The anti-Gallican and anti-Papal enthusiasms were intensified by great personal wrongs. The Dissenting or Low Church interest obtained a great accession of power from the presence of a large body of men educated in non-episcopal churches; and the great Whig maxim, that a government should accord perfect toleration to all Protestant sects, derived a new strength from the manifest material benefits it produced.

The influence of the industrial classes had for a long time been steadily increasing, with the accumulation of industrial wealth. The reigns of the Stuarts, though in their political aspects they were in many respects chequered or disastrous, formed a period of almost uninterrupted material prosperity, the more striking because it was not due to any of those great mechanical inventions which in the present century have suddenly revolutionised great departments of industry. The progress was strictly normal. It may be ascribed to the reclamation of waste lands, to the extension and development of the colonies, to the freedom of the country for a long period from any serious land war. It was noticed, as a remarkable sign of the democratic spirit that followed the Commonwealth, that country gentlemen in England had begun to bind their sons as apprentices to merchants,[2] and also, that about the same time the desire to obtain large portions in marriage led to alliances between the aristocracy and the merchants. Sir W. Temple, writing in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, says:—'I think I remember within less than fifty years, the first noble families that married into the

[1] Thus Atterbury very bitterly wrote: 'I scarce ever knew a foreigner settled in England, whether of Dutch, German, French, Italian, or Turkish growth, but became a Whig in a little time after mixing with us.'—'English Advice to the Freeholders of England' (1714), Somers's *Tracts*, xiii. p. 537.

[2] See Hume's *Hist. of England*, ch. lxii.

So Pope—

Boastful and rough your first son is a squire,
The next a tradesman meek, and much a liar.
—*Moral Essays*, Es. i.

In a pamphlet published in 1722 called '*The danger of the Church and Kingdom from Foreigners considered*,' it is said, 'Now the greatest gentlemen affect to make their junior sons Turkey merchants, and while the diligent son is getting an estate by foreign traffic, the wise father at home employs his talent in railing at foreigners.'—See Southerden Burn's *Hist. of Protestant Refugees*, p. 13.

city for downright money, and thereby introduced by degrees this public grievance which has since ruined so many estates by the necessity of giving good portions to daughters.'[1] The increase of wealth was abundantly attested by all the best authorities. Thus Sir Josiah Child, who published his well-known 'Discourse on Trade' in 1670, assures us that both the merchants and shipping in England had doubled in twenty years. Petty, in his 'Political Arithmetic,' which was published a few years later, declared that within forty years the value of the houses of London had doubled, while most of the leading provincial towns had largely increased, that the royal navy had tripled or quadrupled, that the coal-shipping of Newcastle had quadrupled, that the value of the customs had tripled, that the postage of letters had multiplied twenty-fold, and that, through the great increase of money, the natural rate of interest had fallen from eight to six per cent. Davenant, who examined with great care the material condition of the country at the time of the Revolution, supplies much evidence to the same effect. He tells us that the tonnage of the merchant shipping in 1688 was nearly double of what it had been in 1666; that the royal navy had increased from 62,594 tons to 101,032 tons; that the customs, which in 1666 were farmed out for 390,000*l.* a year, had in the last seventeen years yielded on an average 555,752*l.* In a work published in 1698, he calculated that the general rental of England had risen, since the beginning of the century, from 6,000,000*l.* to 14,000,000*l.*, and the purchasing value of the land from 72,000,000*l.* to 252,000,000*l.*[2] The whole income of the country at the time of the Revolution was estimated at about 43,500,000*l.*[3]

Of the manufactures, the most important were still those of wool, which had already become famous under the Tudors, and were scattered through the valleys of the Thames and Severn, through East Norfolk, South Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Westmoreland. The iron and hardware manufactures of

[1] Temple's *Miscellanies.*

[2] Child's *Discourse on Trade.* Petty's *Political Arithmetic*, pp. 170–171. Davenant's *Discourses on the Public Revenue and Trade of England.* Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 629–630.

[3] Gregory King's *Conclusions upon the State of England*, § vi.

Sheffield and Birmingham were already in existence, and it was noticed that in the later Stuart reigns industry was not only largely increased, but was also more and more concentrated in a few great centres.[1] The prosperity of the country was very seriously retarded by the war that followed the Revolution, but it resumed its progressive march after the Peace of Ryswick, and was accelerated by the foundation of the Bank of England, which greatly assisted credit; by the renovation of the coin, which gave a new stimulus to every branch of industry; and, perhaps, also by the partial abolition of two considerable trade monopolies. The African trade, though it had been largely pursued by interlopers, was from the early Stuart reigns legally a monopoly; but in 1698 all English subjects were allowed to trade, without restriction, in negroes, gold, and silver; and the other branches of the African trade were also opened to them, provided they paid to the Company a duty of five per cent. on redwood, and of ten per cent. on other goods. The Russian trade had been accorded to some London adventurers, who, in the reign of Mary, when seeking for a north-west passage to China, had discovered Archangel, and it had been confirmed to their successors by an Act of Elizabeth. The Company, however, proved too limited and feeble to contend with the rivalry of the Dutch, and it was accordingly enacted, in 1699, that all English subjects might belong to it on the payment of 5*l.*[2] At the close of the reign of William, a return of the mercantile navy of England was drawn up by the Commissioners of Customs, from which it appears that the number of vessels belonging to all the English ports was then 3,281, measuring 261,222 tons, and employing 27,196 men. Of these vessels 560 belonged to London, 165 to Bristol, and 143 to Yarmouth.[3] The costly wars of Anne, though they for a time depressed, did not permanently injure, industry. The lowest point in this reign appears to have been in 1705, when the value of the exports was only 5,308,966*l.*; but in 1713, 1714, and 1715, the three years which immediately followed the peace, the average value

[1] Baines' *Hist. of Liverpool*, 253–259.

[2] Macpherson.

[3] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 719.

was 7,696,573*l.*, which exceeded by nearly a million sterling the amount in the preceding peace.[1]

Many of these figures can, of course, only pretend to an approximate accuracy. All of them appear very small when compared with the gigantic dimensions of modern commerce, but they are sufficient to show that the condition of England was a healthy and a progressive one, and that the commercial classes were steadily rising in importance. One result of this increasing prosperity must, indeed, be looked upon with very mingled feelings. I mean the rapidly accelerated disappearance of the yeomanry class. The main causes of the destruction of this most useful element of English country life are very evident. The system of primogeniture, settlements, and entails, as well as the maze of expensive intricacies with which English law has encumbered the transfer of land, by diminishing greatly the amount which is brought to market, have given it an unnatural and monopoly price, which is still further increased by the social distinction its possession confers, and by the country tastes which make its acquisition an object of great desire to the rich. Under such circumstances the continued existence of a large class of small proprietors was impossible. Men of narrow means could not afford to purchase land. Small landowners had the strongest inducement to sell. But the impulse was greatly strengthened when the development of commercial and manufacturing industry multiplied the paths to wealth. On the one hand, the number of large fortunes competing in the land market was increased. On the other hand, numerous additional facilities were furnished for investing small capitals in more lucrative employments than agriculture. The enclosure of common land, rendering the position of the small yeoman more difficult, aggravated the tendency, and the result was a very considerable transfer of energy from the country to the towns. The feebler members of the yeomanry sank gradually into tenants or labourers, while the more ambitious and enterprising were rapidly absorbed in industrial life.[2]

Of the population of the great manufacturing and trading

[1] Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 163.

[2] On this subject much valuable evidence has lately been collected in Thornton's *Over Population*, Cliff

towns, we are, unfortunately, unable to speak with much precision. No official census of the population of England was made till 1801, and the computations that were based on the returns of births and deaths, and of the hearth-money, though far from valueless, are too vague and too conflicting to be positively relied on. (According to the estimates we possess, the population of England at the beginning of the eighteenth century appears to have been somewhat under 6,000,000,[1] of whom about a tenth part were concentrated in London.) Next to London, but next at a great interval, was Bristol, which retained its position as the second city in England till after the middle of the eighteenth century, and owed its wealth chiefly to its large trade with the American colonies. Its population under Charles II. is said to have been 29,000, and in the middle of the eighteenth century rather more than 90,000.[2] Norwich, which was an old resort of Flemish refugees, and was famous during many generations for its manufacture of worsted and other woollen works, as well as for its supply of fuller's earth, long ranked third among English cities. Its population in 1693 was between 28,000 and 29,000, and it was believed to have nearly or quite doubled by 1760.[3] Manchester had been the seat of a woollen manufacture under the Tudors, and a book published in 1641 mentions that cotton was also worked there, which appears to be the earliest record of that industry in England. It is said to have contained at the end of the seventeenth century less than 6,000 inhabitants, but if so it must have increased with extraordinary rapidity in the first years of the eighteenth century, for Defoe, in his 'Tour through Great

Leslie's *Land Systems of Ireland, England, and the Continent*, Nasse's *Essay on Land Tenures*, and in some of the papers published by the Cobden Club.

[1] The estimates, as might be expected, are very various. Chief-Justice Hale in 1670 computed the population of England at at least 6,000,000. In 1689 another authority, who reckoned the large number of six persons for every house, fixed the population at 7,380,000. Davenant, adopting the same basis of calculation, estimated it in 1695 at not quite 8,000,000. Gregory King computed it in 1690 at nearly 5,500,000, and Mr. Finlaison, who investigated the subject very minutely in the present century, concluded that at the close of the seventeenth century the population of England was a little under 5,200,000. See the different estimates collected in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 68, 634, 674, iii. 134, and in Macaulay's *Hist.* ch. iii.

[2] Macpherson, iii. 322–323.

[3] Macaulay, ch. iii. Macpherson, iii. 323. Blomefield's *Hist. of Norfolk*, vol. ii.

Britain,' which was published in 1727, estimates the population of the city and suburbs at not less than 50,000. According to another estimate, the town alone contained from 40,000 to 45,000 persons in 1760,[1] at which date the population of Birmingham was believed to have been about 30,000, and that of Newcastle, including the suburbs, about 40,000.[2] Liverpool was somewhat slower in emerging into greatness. It was a village of much antiquity, consisted in 1565 of 138 houses or cabins, derived some importance from the fire and the plague, which induced many merchants to abandon London, and gradually became a centre of commerce for the new colonies in the West Indies and for America. It was assisted also by the reclamation of great tracts of waste lands, which stimulated the corn trade, and by the growth of Manchester and other manufacturing towns in its neighbourhood. It is curious, however, to notice that it was only in 1699 that it was thought sufficiently important to form a parish to itself, and that its first dock was not built before 1709. Its population in 1700 is believed to have been slightly under 6,000, but to have increased in the course of the next half-century to about 30,000. Liverpool had by this time become indisputably the third port in the kingdom, and it was soon prominent beyond all others in the slave trade.[3] The whole population of Lancashire was estimated at 166,200 in 1700, and at 297,400 in 1750.[4] At the time of the census of 1871 it exceeded 2,800,000.

In addition to the other causes which united the industrial classes with the Whigs we must reckon the funded system and the creation of the great mercantile companies established after the Revolution. The national debt, which at the accession of William had been very inconsiderable, had increased during his reign and during the reign of his successor with a portentous

[1] Curry's *Hist. of Lancashire*, i. 276. Macpherson, iii. 136, 323. Baines' *Hist. of the Cotton Trade*, pp. 99–100. Defoe's *Tour*, iii. 210. Whittaker's *Hist. of Manchester*.

[2] Macpherson, iii. 324–325.

[3] Baines' *Hist. of Liverpool*. Picton's *Memorials of Liverpool*. Corry's *Hist. of Lancashire*. Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 135. Derrick's *Letters from Liverpool*. See too the voyage of Gonzales (a Portuguese) to England and Scotland, in 1730, Pinkerton's *Voyages*, ii. 39. It appears from the petition of the Liverpool corporation in 1699 for making a new church there, that they already claimed for Liverpool the position of the third port of the trade of England. See Picton, i. 145–146.

[4] Corry's *Hist. of Lancashire*, i. 265.

rapidity. Incurred as it was in a struggle against the Power that was in alliance with the Pretender, it was more than doubtful whether the interest of the debt would be paid if the Government of the Revolution were overthrown, and thus an immense proportion of the capitalists had the strongest personal reasons for supporting the Government. In this manner the national debt, which was in some respects very injurious to the country, was eminently advantageous to the Whigs. Very similar considerations apply to the Bank of England and to the new East India Company. These great corporations exercised an influence which extended to every city in the kingdom, and affected, directly or indirectly, almost every great mercantile fortune. Both of them were created by the Whig Government. Both of them obtained their privileges by the loan of large sums to that Government, and both of them depended for their very existence on the regular payment of the interest.

In this manner a great Whig interest was artificially created, which was attached by the closest ties to the Government of the Revolution and to the House of Brunswick. In 1707, at the news of the intended invasion by the Pretender, the price of stocks at once fell fourteen or fifteen per cent.[1] In 1710, when the Queen resolved to dismiss the Whig ministry of Godolphin, the Bank of England sent a formal deputation to her to deprecate the change.[2] The accession of the Harley ministry, though it promised a return of peace, was at once followed by a depreciation of the funds, which continued till Harley, following in the steps of his predecessors, created the South Sea Company, on the same principle as the great Whig corporations, by granting important mercantile privileges to a portion of the national creditors.[3] As long as Harley retained his ascendancy the national credit was not seriously imperilled, but when Bolingbroke succeeded in displacing him, when the reins of power seemed passing into Jacobite hands, a panic immediately ensued. The funds, as we have seen, rose when the illness of the Queen was followed by a report of her death; they fell at a false

[1] Francis' *Hist. of the Bank of England*, i. 85.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 906–907.

[3] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 17–21. Somers' *Tracts*, xiii. 35.

rumour of her recovery; they rose again when her sudden death disconcerted the Jacobite intrigues.[1] The Jacobites, on the other hand, looked forward to the ruin of the Bank as the most probable of all means of accomplishing their designs.[2] Had Bolingbroke continued in power, it is possible that the funds would have been taxed, and probable that measures would have been taken seriously to restrict the powers of the great mercantile companies, and there were great fears that they might be wholly subverted.[3] The country gentry looked with feelings of the keenest jealousy on the new political power which was arising, and contrasted bitterly the exemption of the fundholder from taxation with the burdens imposed upon land. 'The proprietor of the land,' it was said, 'and the merchant who brought riches home by the returns of foreign trade, had during two wars borne the whole immense load of the national expenses; while the lender of money, who added nothing to the common stock, throve by the public calamity, and contributed not a mite to the public charge.'[4] Nor was this all. It was a fundamental maxim of the Tory party that 'Law in a free country is or ought to be the determination of the majority of those who have property in land;'[5] that 'the right strength of this kingdom depends upon the land, which is infinitely superior and ought much more to be regarded than our concerns in trade.'[6] The Landed Property Qualification Act of 1712 was intended to assert this principle, and it was elicited by the manifest fact that in the latter days of William, and still more in the reign of Anne, the moneyed was, in a great measure, superseding the landed interest. 'Power,' said Swift, 'which, according to an old maxim, was used to follow land, is now gone over to money.'[7] Individual capitalists, and still more

[1] Calamy's *Life*, ii. 292.

[2] See Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 211–212.

[3] See a remarkable passage in Bolingbroke's *Letter to Windham.*

[4] Bolingbroke's *Letter to Windham.*

[5] Swift.

[6] Davenant, iii. 328. Thus, too, Defoe said that in case of the dissolution of the Government, power devolves on the freeholders, 'who are the proper owners of the country.'—Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 425.

[7] *Examiner*, No. xiii. In one of his private letters (Jan. 1721), he says, 'I have ever abominated that scheme of politics, now about thirty years old, of setting up a moneyed interest in opposition to the landed—for I conceived there could not be a truer maxim in our Government than this: that the possessors of the soil are the best judges of what is for the advantage of the kingdom. If others had thought the same way, funds of credit and South Sea projects would neither have been felt nor heard of.'

the two great corporations, descended into the political arena, wrested boroughs, by sheer corruption, from the landlords who had for generations controlled them, and strained every nerve to acquire the political influence which was essential to the security of their property. In 1701 there had been grave inquiries in Parliament about the lavish sums which the East India Company expended among the Members,[1] and the increasing corruption at elections was universally recognised. 'It is said,' wrote one high authority, 'that several persons, utter strangers in the counties to which they went, have made a progress throughout England, endeavouring, by very large sums, to get themselves elected. . . . It is said that there are known brokers who have tried to stock-job elections upon the Exchange, and that for many boroughs there was a stated price. . . . Some persons, having considerable stocks in the Bank of England and in the new East India Company, are more particularly charged with these facts.'[2] 'The mischievous consequence,' wrote Bolingbroke, 'which had been foreseen and foretold too at the establishment of these corporations, appeared visibly. The country gentlemen were vexed, put to great expenses, and even baffled by them at their elections; and among the Members of every Parliament numbers were immediately or indirectly under their influence.'[3] 'Boroughs,' said a third writer, 'are rated in the Royal Exchange like stocks and tallies; the price of a vote is as well known as of an acre of land, and it is no secret who are the moneyed men, and consequently the best customers.'[4]

Under all these circumstances the political influence of the industrial and moneyed classes was greatly increased by the Revolution. They have been the steady supporters of English liberty, the steady advocates of religious toleration within the limits of the Protestant creed. To them, more than to any other class, may be ascribed the tempered energy, the dislike to abstractions and theories, the eminently practical spirit so

[1] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 258–259.

[2] Davenant on the *Balance of Power*.

[3] *Letter to Windham*.

[4] See the very brilliant pamphlet called 'English Advice to the Freeholders of England.'—Somers' *Tracts*, vol. xiii. See, too, Bolingbroke on the *Study of History*, Letter ii. *The History of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne*, ascribed to Swift. Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 340–341.

characteristic of English political life; and their influence has been especially useful in moderating the love of adventure and extravagance common to pure aristocracies. On the other hand, the mercantile theory, which governed commercial legislation till after the writings of Hume, planted a new and powerful principle of international jealousy in European politics. The narrow spirit of commercial monopoly crushed the rising industry of Ireland, and trammelled the industry of the colonies; and the desire of the moneyed classes to acquire political power at the expense of the country gentlemen was the first and one of the chief causes of that political corruption which soon overspread the whole system of parliamentary government.

The Protestant Nonconformists formed the third considerable branch of the Whig party; but the reaction which followed the Restoration, the persecuting laws of the Stuarts, and the gradual diminution of the yeomanry had reduced both their numbers and their influence. In a very imperfect return made to the Government in 1689 those in England and Wales were estimated at about 110,000,[1] and, according to a paper in the possession of William, among the freeholders of the kingdom the proportion of Protestant Nonconformists and Catholics united was not quite 1 to 22.[2] The strength of the Dissenters lay among the tradesmen of the towns and among seafaring men;[3] they reckoned among their number many rich merchants and capitalists, and some of them, as we have seen, attained the highest municipal dignity. They could also boast of a very considerable intellectual eminence. Baxter, Howe, Calamy, and Bunyan would have done honour to any Church. The writings of Matthew Henry are even now the favourite Scripture commentaries of thousands; and Defoe, if not quite the greatest, was certainly the most versatile and prolific of that brilliant group of political writers who have made the reign of Anne so remarkable in literature. The Catholics, Unitarians, Socinians, and all who, without joining these bodies,

[1] See Skeats' *Hist. of the Free Churches of England*, p. 151. This return reckons the whole population of England and Wales as only 2,600,000, which is certainly far below the truth.

[2] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, part ii. book i. append.

[3] Davenant's *Works*, iv. 411.

spoke against the doctrine of the Trinity, or against the supernatural origin of Christianity, continued after the Revolution subject to penal laws which, if they had been strictly enforced, would have amounted to absolute proscription; but other Dissenters were exempted, on certain conditions, from their provisions by the Toleration Act. They were allowed to attend their own places of worship, and were protected by law from all disturbance, provided they took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy and subscribed the declaration against transubstantiation, provided their congregations were duly registered in the Court of the Bishop or Archdeacon or at the County Sessions, and provided also the doors of their meeting-houses remained unlocked and unbarred. Their ministers, however, were compelled to subscribe the doctrinal portion of the Anglican Articles, with the exception of the Baptists, who were exempted from the article relating to infant baptism. The Quakers, who objected to all oaths, and to all subscriptions to human formularies, were only required to affirm their adhesion to the Government, to abjure transubstantiation, and to profess their belief in the Trinity and in the inspiration of the Bible.

This measure undoubtedly conferred a great practical advantage upon the Nonconformists, though it is hardly, I think, deserving of the enthusiasm that has been bestowed on it. It is, indeed, extremely doubtful whether the cause of religious liberty in England owes anything to the Revolution; for James, stupid and bigoted as he was, had at least quite sufficient intelligence to perceive that he could only relieve the small Catholic minority by associating their cause with that of the much larger body of Protestant dissidents, while those who opposed the royal designs would have been almost inevitably driven to compete by large concessions for the alliance of the Dissenters. As we have already seen, the Act of William was technically described only as 'an Act of Indulgence,' suspending in certain cases the operation of laws which still remained upon the Statute Book, and thus leaving the Dissenters, more or less, under the stigma of the law. They were still excluded from the universities, they could be married only according to the Anglican ceremony, and the Corporation and Test Acts prevented

them from entering corporations and public offices without receiving the Sacrament according to the Anglican rite. William earnestly desired complete religious toleration, if not equality, among Protestants; but such a policy, when the fear of a Catholic sovereign was removed, was impossible. Measures to abolish the sacramental test, or to make the reception of the Sacrament in any Protestant form a sufficient test, were introduced and defeated. Another measure, which the King was very anxious to carry, was the Comprehension Bill, the object of which was, by slight alterations in the Anglican Liturgy, by making optional the surplice, the practice of kneeling at one Sacrament, the intervention of sponsors and the employment of the sign of the cross in the other, and by substituting for subscription to the Articles a general declaration that the Anglican worship and doctrine contain all things necessary to salvation, to remove the objections of the great majority of the Dissenters, and to reunite them to the Church. According to the first cast of this Bill, Presbyterian ordination was recognised as valid, but only after the imposition of the bishop's hands; and by this restriction the Romish or sacerdotal element which runs through the English Church would have been preserved. Sectarian spirit, however, on both sides was opposed to the measure. Politicians of all shades saw that an alteration in the forms and Liturgy of the Church would give an increased importance to the Nonjuror schism. The great majority of the clergy were violently opposed to all overtures to the Dissenters. Many of the Dissenters dreaded a Bill which, while it would certainly not extinguish Dissent, would as certainly divide and dislocate the Nonconformist body, empoverish many of its ministers, and lower the position of almost all; while many Whigs feared that the transfer of a large portion of the descendants of the Puritans to the Established Church would incline the balance of power still more to the side of despotism. The opposition grew stronger and stronger, and the Bill was at last referred to Convocation and speedily crushed.

One other measure had been carried in this reign which was of considerable importance, as securing the position of the Quakers. This eccentric, but, in many respects, most admir-

able sect will always be remembered in history for its noble services to the causes of religious tolerance and of the abolition of slavery; and its members, in these latter days, have been chiefly distinguished for their singular benevolence, for the quaint, quiet decorum of their manners, and for their systematic but very harmless defiance, in many small matters of conduct and of belief, of what appear to the outer world to be the dictates of common sense. In spite of much atrocious persecution, they had multiplied greatly in the closing years of the Stuarts, and as soon as the Toleration Act was passed England was studded with their meeting-houses. Between 1688 and 1690, licences were taken out for 131 new temporary and 108 new permanent places of worship for the society, 64 being in Lancashire.[1] The fanaticism which had led some of the first apostles of the sect to walk naked, or almost naked, through the streets, to interrupt the services in the churches, and to rebuke the judges and magistrates in the courts, had gradually subsided. An austere morality, and a tone of manners which rendered impossible most of the forms of wasteful, luxurious, and ostentatious expenditure, speedily raised the society to wealth. It had produced a great statesman in Penn, a great writer in Barclay, a considerable scholar in George Keith, and it was now a large and well-organised body. Many of the peculiarities of the Quakers were of a kind which gave little or no trouble to the legislators. Such were their refusal to recognise the gods Tuesco or Woden by speaking of Tuesday or Wednesday, to flatter a single individual by addressing him with a plural pronoun, to take off their hats in salutation, to use the ordinary phrases of deference or courtesy, or to abandon on any occasion their peculiar attire; and such, too, in a country where there were few soldiers, and where there was no conscription, was their objection to bear arms. Their refusal, however, to take oaths, to pay tithes, and to subscribe articles, rendered necessary a considerable amount of special legislation. The first great step, as we have seen, was taken by the Toleration Act. The second was the measure, carried in 1695, which, enacting that the solemn affirmation of a Quaker

[1] Skeats' *Hist. of Free Churches*, p. 153.

'in presence of Almighty God' should in legal cases be accepted as equivalent to an oath, gave the sect for the first time a power of protecting their property against fraud, and saved them from a vast amount of petty persecution and annoyance. It was only enacted for a period of seven years, and to the end of the following session. It was then renewed for eleven years, but in the Tory ascendancy in the last days of Queen Anne, it was greatly imperilled. Early in the session of 1713 the Quakers petitioned the House of Commons for a continuance of the Act, but the House would not even permit the petition to be brought up. They then applied to the Lords, who passed a Bill in their favour, but the Commons refused even to give it a first reading.[1] Fortunately, however, for the sect, the Tory power was speedily destroyed, and the new Government made the Act of William perpetual. In the matter of tithes the Quakers had also obtained some relief in the reign of William. They were not relieved from the obligation of paying them, but an inexpensive method was provided, under which tithes not exceeding 10*l.* might be levied before two justices of the peace, thus saving the long, expensive, and oppressive proceedings of the Ecclesiastical or Exchequer Courts. This Bill was first enacted only for three years, but it was afterwards renewed, was extended, in the case of Quakers, to all tithes, and was at last made perpetual.

Such was the position acquired by the Nonconformists at the Revolution. We have seen how seriously it was imperilled in the reign of Anne, and how entirely the legislation against them was the work of the Tory party. It was natural that it should be so, as the Established Church was the especial stronghold of Toryism; but it is not the less true that a certain change had passed over the attitude of parties since James had made overtures to the Dissenting leaders, and, by the promise of toleration, had drawn some of them for a time to his side. The Jacobitism of the reign of Anne was violently hostile to the Dissenters, and it was chiefly the Jacobite wing of the Tories, led by Bolingbroke and Atterbury, which forced the hand of Oxford and carried the Schism Act. As a natural consequence

[1] See the *Hist. of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne.*

the whole body of Protestant Dissenters were passionately devoted to the Hanoverian succession.[1] Their numbers appear by this time to have considerably increased. It appears, by a report drawn up by Neal, the well-known historian of Puritanism, in 1715 and 1716, that at that date there were 1,107 Dissenting congregations in England and 43 in Wales. The Presbyterians were by far the most numerous, and they about equalled the Independents and Baptists united.[2] The position of the Nonconformists in the last few months of the reign of Anne was extremely perilous, and they had everything to fear from the ministry of Bolingbroke; but the Queen, by a remarkable coincidence, died on the very day on which the Schism Act was to have come into operation. It is related that on that morning Burnet met Bradbury, the minister of the great Independent Chapel in Fetter Lane, walking through Smithfield with slow steps, and with an absent and dejected air. 'I was thinking,' he said, in reply to the greeting of the Bishop, 'whether I shall have the constancy and resolution of the martyrs who suffered in this spot, for I most assuredly expect to see similar times of violence and persecution.' The Bishop consoled him by the intelligence that the Queen was dying, and promised, as soon as the event occurred, to send a messenger to inform him, or, if it was the hour of public worship, to drop a handkerchief from the gallery of his chapel. A few hours later, while London was still wholly ignorant of what had happened, the signal was given. Bradbury concluded his sermon with a fervent thanksgiving to God, who had blasted the hopes and designs of wicked men. He announced to his startled hearers the accession of George I., and having implored the Divine blessing on the King and on his family, minister and congregation joined in a psalm[3] of triumph, describing the chosen prince, raised up by the Almighty Hand to save His people from their enemies. Some time later the same minister, accompanied by several other leading Nonconformists, was

[1] Burgess, the most popular Dissenting minister in London in the reigns of William and Anne, is said to have once explained from the pulpit that the descendants of Jacob were called Israelites 'because God did not wish his people to be called Jacobites.'—Bogue and Bennett.

[2] Bogue and Bennett, *Hist. of the Dissenters*, i. 357–359.

[3] The eighty-ninth Psalm.

deputed to present an address of congratulation to the new sovereign. In the vestibule of the palace they met Bolingbroke, who asked them sarcastically, as he pointed to their dark robes, which contrasted strangely with the pageantry about them, 'Is this a funeral?' 'No, my Lord,' was the answer, 'not a funeral, but a resurrection!'[1]

These were the chief elements that composed the Whig party which the accession of George I. raised to power. But although a singular combination of skill and good fortune had secured its success, although a dynasty which was once on the throne, and was supported by the army, was able, for a time at least, to command the allegiance of the classes who always rally around order, yet the permanence of the Government seemed more than doubtful. The strongest sympathies and enthusiasms of the nation took other directions, and the balance of classes was decidedly against it. The Whigs directed everything to their own advantage, and entirely discarded the policy of endeavouring to conciliate their opponents. The systematic exclusion of all Tories from the Government; the censure by both Houses of a peace which had been approved by two successive Parliaments; the report of the Secret Committee in which the whole conduct of the late ministers in negotiating the peace was minutely investigated and painted in the blackest colours; and finally the impeachment of Bolingbroke, Oxford, Ormond, and Stafford were sufficient to drive almost the whole party into the arms of Jacobitism. It is remarkable, however, that, even in this season of party violence and party triumph, the Whig leaders shrank from a repetition of the Sacheverell agitation, and abstained very prudently, though very illogically, from impeaching the Bishop of Bristol, who had been one of the plenipotentiaries in negotiating the peace, though they impeached his colleague, Lord Strafford. The violence shown on this occasion was a natural consequence of the measures of the last administration, but few will now question that it was excessive. No conclusive evidence of the Jacobite intrigues of the late Government was at that period accessible to the ministers.

[1] Or according to another version, 'The funeral of the Schism Act—the resurrection of liberty.'—Compare Bogue and Bennett's *Hist. of Dissenters*, ii. pp. 78–79, and Wilson's *Hist. of Dissenting Churches*, iii. 513–514.

The 'restraining orders' furnished a ground for impeachment which was unquestionably valid, but they could affect neither Ormond, whose duty as a soldier was simply to obey orders, nor Strafford, who was negotiating in Holland. However inadequate, and even criminal, might have been the terms of the peace, the approbation of the preceding Parliaments should have sheltered its authors from criminal proceedings. The aspect of English politics was now rapidly changed by the disappearance of many leading figures from the scene. Bolingbroke fled to France, and, in a moment of anger or miscalculation, threw himself openly into the service of the Pretender, and thus exposed himself to an Act of Attainder and irretrievably ruined his future career. Ormond, soon after, took the same course, with a similar result; but after a short time he abandoned politics and lived quietly in France. Oxford awaited the storm with his usual calm courage, and he was flung into the Tower, where he remained untried for two years. In 1715 the Whigs lost Wharton, the most skilful and unscrupulous of their party managers, Halifax, the greatest of their financiers, and Burnet, the most brilliant of their churchmen. Somers lingered till 1716, but he was now a helpless paralytic, and, though a few fitful flashes of his old intelligence were occasionally discerned, his mind for many months before his death was profoundly impaired. Marlborough soon experienced the same fate. Though appointed Captain-General and Master of the Ordnance by the new Government, he received no confidence and exercised scarcely any influence, and he viewed with bitter displeasure the course of events. The death of two daughters, in 1714, threw a deep shadow over his life. In 1716 he was reduced by two successive strokes of paralysis to almost complete impotence, and he remained a pitiable wreck till his death in 1722.

In the country the surprised acquiescence and the sense of relief from impending danger, which had greeted the accession of George I. were soon replaced by a general discontent. The University of Oxford testified its sentiments by conferring, on the very day of the King's coronation, an honorary degree on Sir Constantine Phipps, who had just been removed from the Government of Ireland on suspicion of Jacobitism.

On the same day violent riots broke out at Birmingham, Bristol, Chippenham, Norwich, and Reading. Similar scenes soon occurred in almost every considerable town in the kingdom. The birthdays of Anne and of Ormond and the imprisonment of Oxford were the occasions of violent and threatening disturbances. The House of Lords in 1716 strongly censured the University authorities of Oxford for having refused to take any measures for celebrating the birthday of the Prince of Wales. On the other hand, those who attempted to celebrate the King's birthday in London with the usual festivities were insulted by the populace; and on the following day, which happened to be the anniversary of the Restoration, bonfires were lit, the streets were illuminated, a picture of King William was burnt in Smithfield, great crowds patrolled the city, shouting 'Ormond and High Church for ever!' and several persons were injured. The Dissenters, in 1714 and 1715, were exposed to violence very similar to that which they had experienced after the impeachment of Sacheverell. In London several of their ministers were burnt in effigy. At Oxford a Quaker meeting-house was utterly destroyed, and in most of the towns of Staffordshire, Shropshire, and Cheshire the Nonconformist chapels were wrecked.[1] The Nonjurors now very generally attended the ordinary church service, but they took great pains to show that their antipathy to the Revolution was unabated. Some of them, when the names of the King and royal family were mentioned in the prayers, stood up and faced the congregation. Others less demonstratively glided down on their hassocks, and remained sitting till the prayers were over. Others tried the gravity of the congregation by ostentatiously rustling the pages of their prayer-books in order that they might not hear the obnoxious names.[2] A fashion became common of drinking disloyal toasts in disguised forms, such as 'Kit,' or King James III.; 'Job,' or James, Ormond, and Bolingbroke; 'three pounds fourteen and fivepence,' or James III., Lewis XIV., and Philip V. Innu-

[1] See Wright's *England under the House of Hanover*, Tindals' *History*, Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, Rogers' *Protests of the House of Lords*, i. 234–236.

[2] Kennett's *Life*, pp. 161–162. Perry's *Hist. of the Church of England*, iii. 71.

merable ballads and pamphlets circulated through the country, sustaining and representing the prevailing discontent.

The situation was, undoubtedly, very critical. The ministers had secured a large Whig majority in the Parliament, but there was every probability that if a dissolution occurred in three years, the verdict would have been reversed, and another of those great revulsions of power which of late years had been so frequent would have taken place.[1] The utter ignorance of the King of the language of his people, and his awkward retiring manners, disgusted the nation all the more because it was the habit of the Whig party to throw many imputations upon the late Queen. It was remarked with bitterness that one of the very first acts of the new Government in foreign policy was to embroil England with a Northern Power in the interests of Hanover. Bremen and Verden, which had been ceded to Sweden by the treaty of Westphalia, had, on account of their situation between Hanover and the sea, been long an object of desire to the Princes of the House of Brunswick. In 1712 these provinces, together with Schleswig and Holstein, had been conquered by Denmark; but the King of Denmark, foreseeing that he would be unable to resist the arms of Sweden, on the return of Charles XII. from Turkey, resolved, by the sacrifice of a portion of his new dominions, to endeavour to secure the remainder. He accordingly sold Bremen and Verden to George, as Elector of Hanover, for 150,000*l.*, on the further condition that Hanover should join in the war against Sweden. No sooner had this step been taken than a British fleet was despatched to the Baltic, ostensibly for the purpose of protecting British trade, really for the purpose of intimidating Sweden into concession. The Whig ministers supported this policy, on the ground that these provinces, which command the navigation of the Elbe and of the Weser, the only inlets from the British seas into Germany, are of essential importance in case of war, as protecting or interrupting the

[1] Marshal Berwick, the truest and most moderate of the Jacobite leaders, declared at this time that five out of six of the English nation were on the side of King James, not, indeed, so much on account of his incontestable right, as from hatred to the House of Hanover, and to prevent the ruin of the Church and of the liberties of the kingdom; and he added that many persons of the greatest consideration, many noblemen, clergy, and gentlemen, had given assurances of their good intentions.—*Mémoires du Maréchal de Berwick*, ii. 139–140.

British commerce with Hamburg, and it was therefore a great British interest that they should be in possession of a power which was necessarily friendly to Great Britain. It was answered that a serious risk of war was incurred for the attainment of an old object of Hanoverian ambition, that George would never have entered into the enterprise had it not been for the power he possessed as a British sovereign, and that the English ministers would never have acquiesced in it had they not been anxious by every means to monopolise the favour of the King. A similar disposition, both on the part of the sovereign and his ministers, was shown in the speedy repeal of that clause of the Act of Settlement which prohibited the King from going abroad without the consent of his Parliament. While the tide of discontent in England rose higher and higher, alarming news was reported from Scotland. On September 6, 1715, Lord Mar set up the Jacobite banner at Braemar, and in a few weeks 10,000 men were gathered around it.

The measures of the Government were marked with great energy, promptitude, and severity. The hawkers who cried Tory pamphlets and broadsides through the streets were at once sent to the House of Correction. A reward of 1,000*l.* was offered for the discovery of the author, a reward of 500*l.* for that of the printer, of the 'English Advice to the Freeholders of England,' the most brilliant and popular of the Tory pamphlets. A schoolmaster named Bournois, who asserted that the King had no right to the British throne, was condemned to be scourged through the city, and the sentence was executed with such ferocity that he died in a few days. The disturbances in the great towns were met by a permanent Act, still in force, providing that any assembly of more than twelve persons who, having been enjoined to disperse by a Justice of the Peace, and having heard the proclamation against riots read, did not separate within an hour, should be esteemed guilty of felony. A royal order was issued strictly forbidding the clergy to introduce any political allusions into their sermons; but when the rebellion broke out, all the bishops except Atterbury and Smalridge signed a joint paper condemning it. On the first news of that event the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended. A reward of 100,000*l.* was offered for the apprehension of the Pretender, alive or dead. The contingent

of 6,000 men, which the Dutch had bound themselves by treaty to furnish whenever the Protestant succession was in danger, was claimed, and orders were given for raising in England thirteen regiments of dragoons and eight of infantry; for keeping the trained bands in readiness to suppress tumults; for dismissing suspected Jacobites from their posts in the army, and even for arresting, with the consent of the House, some Jacobite Members of Parliament.

The rebellion was from the first almost hopeless. Berwick stated, indeed, with much plausibility, that if supported by a body of regular troops it must have succeeded;[1] but everything at this time seemed to conspire against the Stuarts. Between the inception and the execution of the project, Lewis XIV. died, the Regent who succeeded to power leaned towards the English alliance, and thus, while the reigning King could receive succours both from Germany and from Holland, all chance of French assistance to the Jacobites was lost. Hardly less calamitous had been the flight of Ormond. His character, his position, and his great liberality, had made him one of the most popular men in England. Had he been in it when the insurrection broke out, he would have been universally recognised as its chief, and as he had commanded the British army, he had at least some military knowledge, and would probably have drawn a portion of the regular troops to his side. An attempt was made to induce the King of Sweden to join in the enterprise, but it was unsuccessful, and the whole project was undertaken with a recklessness and a fatuity almost incredible. No single step was taken to produce a rebellion in Ireland, and the Government was therefore able to despatch several regiments from that country to crush the Scotch Jacobites. Even in England no general rising appears to have been prepared. The rebellion in Scotland was hurried on by the orders of the Pretender, without the knowledge either of Bolingbroke or of Berwick,[2] and there was scarcely a single man of ordinary military knowledge connected with it. Mar, though in other fields he showed considerable ability, was in this respect conspicuously deficient, and he was also wholly without the decision and

[1] *Mémoires de Berwick*, ii. 148. [2] Ibid. ii. 142.

daring needed for the enterprise. The Jacobites were almost without arms and without organisation. Their secret intelligence was interrupted; their plans were discovered; several of their leaders, before they had time to take arms, were thrown into prison; and, although a large proportion of the nation undoubtedly sympathised with their cause, few men were prepared to risk their lives and properties in an enterprise at once so hazardous and so mismanaged.

A plan for surprising Edinburgh Castle was defeated by the secret information of a woman. The Highland chiefs were summoned by the Government to Edinburgh; and though few of them obeyed, Argyle and Sutherland, who were, perhaps, the most powerful, were on the Hanoverian side, and many of the leading Jacobites in Scotland were put under arrest. Mar, with the bulk of the insurgents, seized on Perth; but he remained there inactive and undecided, waiting, apparently, for an insurrection in England during the critical time that elapsed before the Government could organise its forces. In England the energy of the ministers completely paralysed the rebellion. Oxford, which was a special centre of Jacobitism, was occupied by a large body of cavalry. Ormond, after a very unwise delay, attempted a descent upon Devonshire, and as the western counties were intensely Tory, he expected a general rising, but his plans were betrayed by a Jacobite agent named M'Lean. Windham, Lord Lansdowne, and other prominent gentlemen who were to have organised the movement, were arrested; the garrison of Plymouth was changed, Bristol was defended by a body of infantry, and the success of these measures was so complete that Ormond, finding no prospect of support, returned to France without even landing. In Northumberland a body of Jacobites took up arms under Mr. Forster, one of the Members for the county, supported by Lord Derwentwater and some other leading gentry. They were joined by a small body of Scotch insurgents under Lord Kenmure and the Earls of Carnwath, Nithsdale, and Wintoun, who had taken arms in the south-west of Scotland, and soon after by a brigade of about 2,000 Highlanders under the command of an officer named Mackintosh, who had been despatched by Mar. This officer, who was one of the few men who gained some laurels in the contest, had previously

succeeded in crossing the Frith of Forth in the face of three English men-of-war, had taken possession of Leith, and would probably have captured Edinburgh itself had not the royal army under Argyle marched to its assistance. He then succeeded in effecting his retreat unmolested, and joined the Northumberland army, when, however, many of his Highlanders deserted. Instead of marching northwards to attack Argyle in the rear, the insurgents made an unsuccessful attempt upon Newcastle, marched into Lancashire, where they were joined by many of the Roman Catholics who were so numerous in that county, and occupied Preston; but they were soon attacked by General Wills, and, after a short siege, compelled to surrender. On the same day the first considerable encounter in Scotland took place. Mar, after a long delay, having been joined by the northern clans under Lord Seaforth, and by those of the west under General Gordon, marched towards Stirling in hopes of joining the insurgents in the south, and was encountered by Argyle at Sheriffmuir. The battle was indecisive, or, to speak more accurately, the left wing of the army of Argyle was totally defeated by the Highlanders, while the right wing was as completely victorious. Each party claimed the victory, and each party drew off at last without molestation. Nearly at the same time the cause of the Pretender received a fatal blow in the capture of Inverness by Lord Lovat. This sagacious and unprincipled man had now for a short time deserted, through a personal motive, the Jacobite cause, to which he had formerly belonged, and for which he afterwards died, and he rendered an eminent service to the Government. Lord Seaforth and Lord Huntly were compelled to return to defend their own country, where they soon after laid down their arms, and the army of Mar was rapidly disintegrated by desertions and divisions. At last, towards the close of December, the Pretender himself came over to Scotland. He made a public entry into Dundee, reviewed the remnant of his army at Perth, and tried to rekindle its waning spirit. It was, however, too late. The Dutch auxiliaries had already arrived. The Jacobites were almost destitute of money, forage, ammunition, and provisions, and nothing remained but a precipitate retreat. It was effected through the deep snow of a Scotch winter. The Pretender, with Lord Mar and a few other

persons of distinction, embarked in a small French vessel from Montrose, and having first sailed to Norway, they succeeded, by a circuitous route, in evading the English cruisers, and arriving in safety at the French coast, while their army rapidly dispersed. Of the prisoners, great numbers were brought to trial. Two peers and thirty-four commoners were executed. Lords Nithsdale and Wintoun, who were reserved for the same fate, succeeded in escaping, and many Jacobites were sentenced by the law courts to less severe punishments, or were deprived of their titles and possessions by Acts of Attainder.

So ended the Rebellion of 1715, which reflected very little credit on any of those concerned in it. How little confidence the most acute observers felt in the stability of the dynasty is curiously illustrated by the fact, which has recently been discovered, that Shrewsbury, who in 1714 had, of all men, done most to bring it on the throne, was deeply engaged in 1715 in Jacobite intrigues, while Marlborough had actually furnished money for the enterprise of the Pretender.[1] Had that enterprise ever worn a hopeful aspect, large classes would probably have rallied around it; but in England, at least, scarcely anyone was prepared to make serious sacrifices, or to encounter serious dangers for its success. Dislike to the foreign dynasty was general, but the conflict between the passion of loyalty and the hatred of Catholicism had lowered the English character. The natural political enthusiasm of the time was driven inwards and repressed. Divided sentiments produced weak resolutions, and a material and selfish spirit was creeping over politics. In this, as in the preceding reign, the Whigs showed themselves incomparably superior to their opponents in organisation, in energy, and in skill; but how little they counted upon the national gratitude or support was shown by the fact that one of their first cares, on the termination of the rebellion, was to pass the Septennial Act, in order to adjourn for several years a general election. Much was, indeed, said of the demoralisation of the country, and of the ruin of the country gentry, re-

[1] This very remarkable fact is established by two letters from Bolingbroke to the Pretender, dated respectively Aug. 20, and Sept. 25, 1715, extracted from the Stuart Papers, and given in the appendix to the 1st vol. of Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*.

sulting from triennial elections; of the animosities planted in constituencies which had no time to subside; of the instability of a foreign policy depending on a constantly fluctuating legislature; but the real and governing motive of the change was the conviction that an election in 1717 would be probably fatal to the ministry and, very possibly, to the dynasty. The Bill, though it related specially to the constitution of the Lower House, was first introduced in the House of Lords, and as it was passed without a dissolution, Parliament not only determined the natural duration of future legislatures, but also prolonged the tenure of the existing House of Commons for four years beyond the time for which it was elected.

It was on this side that the great dangers of the dynasty lay. If the character of Parliament continued to fluctuate as rapidly as it had done in the first decade of the century; if the Church and the landed gentry continued to look on the reigning family with hostility or with a sullen indifference, it was inevitable that the normal action of parliamentary government should soon bring the enemies of the dynasty into power. If the House of Brunswick was to continue on the throne, it was absolutely necessary that something should be done to clog the parliamentary machine, to prevent it from responding instantaneously to every breath of popular passion, to strengthen the influence of the executive both over the House and over the constituencies. The first great step towards this end was the Septennial Act, but it would, probably, have proved less successful had not a long series of causes been in action which lowered still more the Tory sentiment in England, and gradually and almost insensibly produced a condition of thought and government very favourable to the policy of the Whigs.

In the first place, it was inevitable that the monarchical sentiment should be materially diminished by the mere fact that the title to the crown was disputed. In this respect the position of England resembled that of a very large part of Europe, for the great multitude of disputed titles forms one of the most remarkable political characteristics of the early years of the eighteenth century. The throne of England was disputed between the House of Hanover and the House of Stuart. The Spanish throne was disputed between Philip V.

and the Emperor. In Italy the Houses of Medici and of Farnese became extinct, and the successions of Tuscany and Parma were disputed by the Emperor and the Spanish Queen. In Poland the rival claims of Stanislaus, who was supported by Charles XII., and of Augustus, who was supported by Peter the Great, were during many years contested by arms. In France the title of the young King was, indeed, undisputed, but his fragile constitution made men look forward to his speedy death, and parties were already forming in support of the rival claims of the Regent and of the King of Spain. Among the causes which were lowering the position of monarchy in Europe in the eighteenth century, the multiplication of these disputed titles deserves a prominent place. They shook the reverence for the throne; they destroyed the mystic sanctity that surrounded it; they brought the supreme authority of the nation into the arena of controversy.

In England, since the period of the Restoration, the doctrine of the Divine right of kings and of the absolute criminality of all rebellion, was, as we have seen, a fundamental tenet, not only of the Tory party, but also of the Established Church. But from the accession of George I. it began rapidly to decline. The enthronement of the new dynasty had, for a time at least, solved the doubtful question of the succession according to the principles of the Revolution. The chief offices in the Church were reserved for divines who accepted those principles. The inconsistencies of the clergy during the three preceding reigns had weakened their authority and broken the force of the Anglican tradition; and in the rapid disappearance of doctrinal teaching, and the silent conversion of Christianity into a mere system of elevated morality, a theory of government which based authority upon a religious dogma appeared peculiarly incongruous. The tendency was assisted by the religious scepticism of the most brilliant of the Tory chiefs. The theory of 'the Patriot King,' as far as it can be discerned through the cloud of vague though eloquent verbiage in which it is enveloped, is, that the power and prerogative of the sovereign should be greatly enlarged as the only efficient check upon the corruption of Parliaments; but in this, as in other of his later writings, Bolingbroke spoke of the theological doctrine which had once been the rallying cry

of his party with unmitigated contempt.[1] It was, of course, impossible that such a tone should have been employed by the Tory leader in the more active portion of his career; but his religious sentiments were, probably, very generally surmised, and there is, I believe, no evidence that he ever employed or countenanced the language of Sacheverell and his school.

There was another consideration which had a very powerful influence in the same direction. The undoubted benefits which England obtained from the events of the Revolution were purchased not only by the evil of a disputed succession, but also by that of a party king. The very politicians who would naturally have been most inclined to magnify the royal authority learned to look upon the reigning sovereign as the head of their opponents, and to make it a main object of their policy to abridge his power. This change had been already foreshadowed in the severe restrictions the Act of Settlement imposed upon the Sovereign, and there were few subjects on which Tory pamphleteers dilated with more indignant eloquence than the facility with which the Whigs afterwards consented to relax its limitations.[2] Windham denounced in the strongest terms the unconstitutional conduct of the new king in endeavouring by a proclamation to influence the elections of 1715. The most jealous critics of the civil list were to be found in the Tory ranks. In 1722, when the House of Commons voted an address to the King, promising to enable him to suppress all remaining spirit of rebellion, it was the Tory Shippen who moved that the clause should be added 'with due regard to the liberty of the subject, the constitution in Church and State, and the laws now in force.'[3] Whatever may have been the private sentiments of its leaders, the party which assumed this attitude publicly disclaimed the imputation of Jacobitism. Its members, indeed,

[1] 'As kings have found the great effects wrought in government by the empire which priests obtain over the consciences of mankind, so priests have been taught by experience that the best way to preserve their own rank, dignity, wealth, and power, all raised upon a supposed Divine right, is to communicate the same pretension to kings, and, by a fallacy common to both, impose their usurpations on a silly world. This they have done: and in the State as in the Church, these pretensions to a Divine right have been carried highest by those who have had the least pretension to the Divine favour.'—*The Idea of a Patriot King.* See also the *Dissertation on Parties*, letters vi., viii., xiv.

[2] See, for example, Atterbury's 'English Advice to the Freeholders of England.'—Somers' *Tracts*, vol. xiii.

[3] *Parl. Hist.*, viii. 37.

well knew that that imputation was the main obstacle to their political success, but at the same time they regarded the royal power with constant jealousy, and their public language was in glaring opposition to that which had so long been the very shibboleth of their school.[1]

By a similar inversion, the deep English feeling of respect for law and for all duly constituted authority, was now turned against high monarchical views. English political opinion has usually been pre-eminently distinguished for its moderation, and this characteristic has been very largely due to two great events in English history. Democratic excesses had been completely discredited by the Commonwealth, while the Revolution had discredited extreme monarchical doctrines, by associating them with Jacobitism, and therefore with conspiracy against the law.

The influences that were at work, altering the position of the sovereign, were, it is true, not all in the same direction. The large standing armies that were maintained after the Revolution, the Riot Act, the increase of patronage resulting from extended establishments and from the National Debt, and lastly the prolongation of the duration of Parliaments, were all favourable to his power or his influence. Great institutions, however, cannot rest solely upon a material basis, and the causes that were at work lowering the English monarchy were such as no extension of patronage or even of prerogative could compensate. Divested of the moral and imaginative associations that encircled the legitimate line, deprived of the religious doctrine on which it had once been based, and alienated from the party who are the natural exponents of monarchical enthusiasm, it sank at once into a lower plane. The King could lay no claim to a Divine right.[2] His title was exclusively parliamentary, and there was nothing either in his person or his surroundings to appeal to the popular imagination. A profound revolution, it was noticed, took place in the etiquette of the Court. The pomp

[1] 'The Tories have been so long obliged to talk in the republican style that they seem to have made converts of themselves by their hypocrisy, and to have embraced the sentiments as well as the language of their adversaries.'—Hume's *Essay on Parties.*

[2] As Bolingbroke said, 'A notion was entertained by many that the worse title a man had, the better king he was likely to make.'—*Dissertation on Parties*, letter vi.

and pageantry of royalty, which had long been dear to Englishmen, and which had reflected, and in some degree sustained, the popular reverence for the King, had almost disappeared.[1] George I. brought to England the simple habits of a German Court. His wife was a prisoner in Germany. His favourites were coarse and avaricious German mistresses. He spoke no English; he was in his fifty-fifth year, and he had no grace of manner and no love of display. Under these circumstances his Court assumed a particularly simple and unimposing character, which the parsimony and the tastes of his two successors led them to maintain.

With the Divine right, the ascription of a miraculous power naturally passed away. The service for the miracle of the royal touch was, indeed, reprinted in the first Prayer-book of George I.[2]; but the power was never exercised or claimed by the Hanoverian dynasty, and thus one great source of the popular reverence for the monarchy disappeared. For some time, however, we may trace the faint glimmerings of a supernatural aureole in the exiled line. James II., having lost his crown mainly on account of his religion, and having shown in his latter years a deep and touching piety,[3] was naturally regarded with great reverence by the more devoted of his co-religionists, and on his death there were some attempts to invest him with the reputation of a Saint. Worshippers flocked in multitudes to the church where his body was laid, to ask favour by his intercession. A curious letter is still preserved, written by the Bishop of Autun, in the

[1] A very intelligent traveller who described England about 1720, writes: 'No prince in the world lives in the state and grandeur of the King and Queen of England . . . Yet in my own private opinion it savours too much of superstition, being a respect that religion allows only to the King of kings. King George, since his accession to the throne, hath entirely altered this superstitious way of being served on the knee at table. King Charles II., King James, King William, and Queen Anne, whenever they dined in public, received wine upon the knee from a man of the first quality, who was Lord of the Bedchamber in waiting; and even when they washed their hands that lord on the knee held the bason. But King George hath entirely altered that method; he dines at St. James's privately, served by his domestics, and often sups abroad with his nobility.'—*A Journey through England* (by Macky), 4th ed. 1724, vol. i. pp. 198–199.

[2] Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, p. 437.

[3] The more amiable aspects of the latter days of James—which Macaulay has completely slurred over—are well given by Ranke in his *Hist. of England* (Eng. trans.), v. 274–5.

December of 1701, to the widow of James, describing in much detail what the writer believed to have been a miraculous cure, of which he had himself been the object. For more than forty years, he said, he had been afflicted with a tumour beneath the right eye, which, when pressed, emitted matter. In the beginning of the preceding April the fluxion ceased, the tumour rapidly grew larger than a nut, and it became so painful that the patient had not a moment of repose. A surgeon lanced it, and from this time the fluxion re-commenced with such abundance that it was necessary to dress the sore eight or ten times in the twenty-four hours. The bishop came to Paris and consulted several leading physicians, but they told him that there was no remedy, and that he must bear the inconvenience for the remainder of his life. On September 19 and 20, two or three days after the death of James, two nuns, in two different convents, independently announced to him their persuasion that the first miracle of the deceased King would be in his favour, and promised to pray God, by the intercession of James, to effect a cure. A few days after, as the bishop was celebrating mass, in the nunnery of Chaillot, for the soul of the King, his tumour ceased to flow, and all traces of the malady disappeared. Another story was circulated, concerning a young man of Auvergne, who had been afflicted with fits, which were believed to be of a paralytic nature, had lost all use of his limbs, and had tried in vain many remedies, both medical and spiritual. Immediately upon the death of James, a friend, who had a great veneration for that prince, recommended the sufferer to seek help through the intercession of the saintly King. He did so, and vowed, if he recovered, to make a pilgrimage to his tomb. From that day he began to amend. On the ninth day he was completely recovered, and a deposition was drawn up by the priest of his parish, and signed by himself, attesting the miraculous nature of the cure.[1] Several other cases were narrated of miracles worked by the intercession of the King, and there is not much doubt that if the Stuarts had been restored, and had continued Catholics, he would have been canonised.[2] Occasional rumours

[1] These documents are preserved among the papers of the Cardinal Gualterio. British Museum. Add. MSS. 20311.

[2] See the very curious extracts from the Nairne Papers, in Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. 595–599. Bolingbroke noticed in 1717 how

of cures of scrofula, effected by the touch of the Pretender, in Paris or in Rome, were long circulated in England,[1] and the old ceremony was revived at Edinburgh in 1745.[2] The credit that once attached to it, however, had almost passed, though the superstition long lingered, and is, perhaps, even now hardly extinct in some remote districts. In France, the ceremony was performed as recently as the coronation of Charles X., who touched, on that occasion, 121 sick persons.[3] As late as 1838, a minister of the Shetland Isles, where scrofulous diseases are very prevalent, tells us that no cure was there believed to be so efficacious as the royal touch; and that, as a substitute for the actual living finger of royalty, a few crowns and half-crowns, bearing the effigy of Charles I., were carefully handed down from generation to generation, and employed as a remedy for the evil.[4]

Another very important cause of the decline of the power of royalty was the increased development of party government. The formation of a ministry, or homogeneous body of ruling statesmen of the same politics, deliberating in common, and in which each member is responsible to the others, has been justly described by Lord Macaulay as one of the most momentous and least noticed consequences of the Revolution. It was essential to the working of parliamentary government, and it was scarcely less important as abridging the influence of the Crown. As long as the ministers were selected by the sovereign from the most opposite parties, as long as each was responsible only for his own department, and was perfectly free to vote, speak, or intrigue against his colleagues, it is obvious that the chief efficient power must have resided with the sovereign. When,

James 'passes already for a saint and reports are encouraged of miracles which they suppose to be wrought at his tomb.'—*Letter to Windham.*

[1] Thus the Nonjuror historian Carte relates the case of a young man from Bristol named Christopher Lovel, known to himself, who was cured by the Pretender at Paris in 1716 (Carte's *Hist. of England*, i. 291–292). This anecdote is said to have seriously impaired the success of Carte's history. See, too, a tract called *A Letter from a Gentleman in Rome giving an account of some surprising Cures of the King's Evil by the touch, lately effected in the neighbourhood of that city* (1721).

[2] Chambers' *Hist. of the Rebellion of* 1745, p. 125.

[3] *Annuaire Historique*, 1825, p. 275.

[4] *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, xv. p. 85. A seventh son was also believed to have the power of curing scrofula by his touch. See a case in Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xiv. 210. See too Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, art. *Miranda.*

however, the conduct of affairs was placed in the hands of a body forming a coherent whole, bound together by principle and by honour, and chosen out of the leaders of the dominant party in Parliament, the chief efficient power naturally passed to this body, and to the party it represented. Although, in the reign of William, the advice of Sunderland and the exigencies of public affairs had induced William to fall back upon government by a single party, yet he never renounced his preference for a mixed ministry, composed of moderate Whigs and moderate Tories; during almost the whole of his reign he succeeded, in some degree, in attaining it, and he always held in his own hands the chief direction of foreign affairs. His successor, in this respect at least, steadily pursued the same end, and the moderate and temporising policy, as well as the love of power, of Godolphin and Harley assisted in perpetuating the old system. The first ministry of Anne, to almost the close of its existence, was a chequered one, and although at last the Whig element became completely predominant, the introduction of the Whig junto was distasteful to Godolphin, and bitterly resented by the Queen. Her letters to Godolphin, when the accession of Sunderland to the ministry had become inevitable, express her sentiments on the subject in the strongest and clearest light. She urged that the appointment would be equivalent to throwing herself entirely into the hands of a party; that it was the object of her life to retain the faculty of appointing to her service honourable and useful men on either side; that if she placed the direction of affairs exclusively in the hands either of Whigs or Tories, she would be entirely their slave, the quiet of her life would be at an end, and her sovereignty would be no more than a name.[1] On the overthrow of Godolphin, it was the earnest desire both of Harley and of the Queen that a coalition ministry should be formed, in which, though the Tories predominated, they should not possess a monopoly of power. Overtures were made to Somers and Halifax; and Cowper was urgently and repeatedly pressed by the Queen to retain the Great Seal.[2] The refusal of the Whig leaders made the Government essentially Tory, but, as

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. li., lii.

[2] See Onslow's note to Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 553–554. Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors* (5th ed.), v. 274–277.

we have already seen, it was a bitter complaint of the October Club that several of the less prominent Whigs were retained in office, and the habit of balancing between the parties still continued. 'I'll tell you one great state secret,' wrote Swift to Stella, as early as February 1710-11, 'the Queen, sensible how much she was governed by the late ministry, runs a little into t'other extreme, and is jealous in that point, even of those who got her out of the other's hands.' 'Her plan,' said a well-informed writer, 'was not to suffer the Tory interest to grow too strong, but to keep such a number of Whigs still in office as should be a constant check upon her ministers.'[1] Harley, who dreaded the extreme Tories, fully shared her view; he was always open to overtures from the Whigs, and it was this policy which at last produced the ministerial crisis that was cut short by the death of the Queen.

With the new reign all was changed. In the first anxious month after the accession of George I., it was doubtful whether he would throw himself entirely into the hands of the Whigs, or whether, by bestowing some offices on the Tories, he would make an effort at once to conciliate his opponents, and to retain in his own hands a substantial part of the direction of affairs. Every step in his policy, however, showed that he was resolved to adopt the former alternative, and the Tories soon learnt to realise the pathetic truth of the words which Bolingbroke wrote, on the occasion of his own contemptuous dismissal: 'The grief of my soul is this: I see plainly that the Tory party is gone.' Halifax appears to have urged the appointment of Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bromley, and some other Tories, to high office under the Crown;[2] but Townshend and Cowper, with a zeal that was not purely disinterested, pressed upon the King the impossibility of distributing his favours equally between the

[1] Sheridan's *Life of Swift*, pp. 124–125. In a tract called *An Enquiry into the behaviour of the Queen's last Ministers*, Swift says: 'She had entertained the notion of forming a moderate or comprehensive scheme, which she maintained with great firmness, nor would ever depart from, until about half a year before her death.'

[2] Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, vol. i. p. 60 (ed. 1798). It appears that offices, but apparently sinecures, were offered to and refused by Hanmer and Bromley. See some interesting letters on this subject in Sir H. Bunbury's *Life of Hanmer*, pp. 53–56, 60–61. Lord Anglesey, who, though a Tory, had followed Sir Thomas Hanmer in opposing the Tory ministry, received a place in the Irish treasury.

parties,[1] and, with the exception of Nottingham, who, during the latter days of Queen Anne, had completely identified himself with the Whigs, and who was for a short time President of the Council, all Tories were excluded from the management of affairs. It was urged that, in the very critical moment of accession, it was indispensable that the King should be served only by statesmen on whom he could perfectly rely; that the leaders of the Tory party had in the last reign been deeply implicated in Jacobite intrigues; that it was difficult or impossible to say how far Jacobitism had spread among them; that a division of offices would be sure to create jealousy and disloyalty in the weaker party, and to enfeeble, in a period of great danger, the policy of the Government; that, in the very probable event of the Pretender becoming Protestant, the House of Brunswick could count on no one but the most decided Whigs. On the other hand, it is certain that a very large part of the Stuart sympathies of the Tories was simply due to a fear that the new Government would not recognise the legitimate claims of the party to a fair share of political power, and it is equally certain that the landed gentry and the clergy in England were strongly attached to that party and were bitterly exasperated by its proscription. It was not forgotten that the Act of Settlement, by virtue of which the King sat on the throne, was brought in by a Tory statesman, that the Peace of Utrecht, which was the great measure of the Tory ministry, contained a clause compelling the French sovereign to recognise the Protestant succession, and to expel the Pretender from France, and that one section of the party, under the guidance of Sir Thomas Hanmer, had never wavered in its attachment to the Act of Settlement. On the death of the Queen, they had all, at least passively, accepted the change of dynasty, and there is no reason to question the substantial truth of the assertion of Bolingbroke, that the proscription of the Tories by George I. for the first time made the party entirely Jacobite.[2] But,

[1] Campbell's *Chancellors*, v. 293. It is said that, among his German advisers, Gortz recommended some favour to the Tories, but Bernsdorf was wholly in favour of the Whigs. See a letter of Horace Walpole in Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 48.

[2] *Letter to Windham.* This is strongly corroborated by a letter of Iberville to the French King, written on Oct. 24, 1714 (N.S.). He says, 'Votre Majesté a vu par mes précédentes dépêches que plusieurs des Tories qu'on appelle rigides, c'est à dire

whatever may have been its effect on the stability of the dynasty, there can be no doubt of the effect of the Whig monopoly of office on the authority of the sovereign. He was no longer the moderating power, holding the balance in a heterogeneous and divided Cabinet, able to dismiss a statesman of one policy and to employ a statesman of another, and thus in a great measure to determine the tendency of the Government. He could govern only through a political body which, in its complete union and in its command of the majority in Parliament, was usually able, by the threat of joint resignation, which would make government impossible, to dictate its own terms. The peculiarity of his position added to his dependence. His throne was exceedingly insecure. He enjoyed no popularity, and he was almost wholly ignorant of the language, the customs, and the domestic policy of his people. His predecessors always presided at the deliberations of the Cabinet, but George I., on account of his ignorance of the language, was never present, and his example was in this respect followed by his successors.

In this manner, by the force of events, much more than by any express restrictive legislation, a profound change had passed over the position of the monarchy in England. The chief power fell into the hands of the Whig statesmen. Nottingham, who was the only partial exception, having exerted himself in favour of clemency towards the noblemen who were condemned during the rebellion, was dismissed in the beginning of 1716,[1] and the triumphant party made it their main task to consolidate their ascendancy. They did this chiefly in two ways. They steadily laboured to identify the Tory party with Jacobitism, and thus to persuade both the sovereign and the people that a Tory Government meant a subversion of the dynasty. As there was absolutely no enthusiasm for the reigning sovereign, the prospect might not in itself appear very alarming, but it was

zélés à l'outrance pour l'Eglise Anglicane et pour le gouvernement monarchique, sont devenus Jacobites, ne voyant d'autre moyen d'empescher l'entière ruine de leur party que d'appeler le Prétendant; et que la guerre avec V. M. leur paroissoit absolument nécessaire pour y réussir. J'ai vu clairement que ce sentiment devenoit chaque jour plus commun parmy eux et qu'il y a toute apparence que les Tories modérés y entreront aussi par pur zèle de party mais avec plus de retenue.' Bunbury's *Life of Sir T. Hanmer*, pp. 60–61.

[1] See, on this dismissal, Robert Walpole to Horace Walpole, March 6, 1715–16.—Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 51.

clearly understood that the downfall of the dynasty meant civil war, revolution, and perhaps national bankruptcy. They also began systematically to build up a vast system of parliamentary influence. The wealth of the great Whig houses, the multitude of small and venal boroughs, the increase of Government patronage, and the Septennial Act, which, by prolonging the duration of Parliament, made it more than ever amenable to ministerial influence, enabled them to carry out their policy with a singular completeness.

The condition of European politics greatly assisted them. The chief external danger to the dynasty lay in the hostility of France, but this hostility was now for a long period removed. The Regent from the first had leaned somewhat towards the English alliance, and after the suppression of the rebellion of 1715 he took decided steps in this direction. He had, indeed, the strongest personal interest in doing so. The young prince, who was his ward, and who was the undoubted heir to the throne, was so weak and sickly that his death might at any time be expected. In that case the crown, according to the provisions of the Peace of Utrecht, devolved upon the Regent, but it was extremely probable that Philip of Spain would claim it, in spite of the act by which he had renounced his title. The succession of the Regent would then be in the utmost danger. It was possible that Philip, inspired by the daring genius of Alberoni, who was now rising rapidly to ascendancy in his councils, would endeavour to unite under one sceptre the dominions both of France and of Spain. In that case a European war was inevitable, but it would be a war in which the whole national sentiment of France would be opposed to the Regent, who was personally unpopular, and who would be an obstacle to the most cherished dream of French ambition. It was possible also, and perhaps more probable, that Philip would endeavour merely to exchange the throne of Spain for that of France. If he abdicated in favour of a prince who was acceptable to the Powers who had been allied in the last war, the great object of the Whig party in the reign of Anne would be realised; and it was therefore by no means improbable that the allied Powers would favour his attempt. If England could be induced unequivocally to guarantee the succession of the House of Orleans,

if the Whig Government of George I. would in this respect at least cordially adopt the policy of the Tory ministry which negotiated the Peace of Utrecht, it was clear that the prospects of the Regent would be immensely improved. On the other hand, the reasons inducing the English Government to seek a French alliance were at least equally strong. France could do more than all other Powers combined to shake the dynasty, and as long as the Jacobite party could look forward to her support it would never cease to be powerful. Besides this, an English guarantee might so strengthen the House of Orleans as to prevent another European war, and avert the danger of the union of the two crowns. Hanoverian politics had also begun to colour all English negotiations, and a great coldness which had sprung up between the Emperor and the Hanoverian Government, on account of the claims of the latter to Bremen and Verden, helped to incline George towards a French rather than an Austrian alliance. There was also a dangerous question pending between England and France, which it might be possible amicably to arrange. The Peace of Utrecht had stipulated that the harbour of Dunkirk should be destroyed, and the injury that had been done to British commerce by the privateers which issued from that harbour was so great that scarcely any provision in the treaty was equally popular. It had been in a great degree fulfilled, but the French had proceeded to nullify it by constructing a new canal on the same coast at Mardyke. The destruction of this incipient harbour became in consequence one of the strongest desires of the English.

These various considerations drew together the Powers which had so long been deadly enemies. The negotiation was chiefly conducted at Hanover by Stanhope on the side of England, and by Dubois on that of France, and it resulted in a treaty which gave an entirely new turn to the foreign policy of England. By this treaty the Regent agreed to break altogether with the Pretender, to compel him to reside beyond the Alps, and to destroy the new port at Mardyke, while both Powers confirmed and guaranteed the Peace of Utrecht and particularly the order of the succession to the crowns of England and France which it established. Thus, by a singular vicissitude of politics, it was the Whig party which was now the most anxious to ally itself

with France in the interest of that Protestant succession which Lewis XIV. had so bitterly opposed. The States-General somewhat reluctantly acceded to the treaty, which was finally concluded in January 1716-17.

It would be difficult to overrate the value of this alliance to the new dynasty and to the Whig party. It paralysed the efforts of the Jacobites, and it was especially important as the aspect of Europe was still in many respects disquieting. The Emperor, as we have seen, had prolonged the war unsuccessfully for some months after the Peace of Utrecht, and though hostilities were terminated by the peace which was negotiated at Rastadt, and finally ratified at Baden in September 1714, there were still serious questions to be settled. One of the most important results of the war was the transfer of the Spanish Netherlands to the Emperor. It was a measure which William had regarded as of transcendant importance in securing Holland from the aggression of France, and it was accordingly given a prominent place among the objects of the great treaty of alliance of 1701.[1] It was, however, the determination both of the Dutch and of the English that this cession should be conditional upon the Dutch retaining the right of garrisoning a line of border fortresses in Spanish Flanders, and this privilege was very displeasing to the Emperor. The barrier treaty of 1709 had been negotiated between England and Holland without his assent. The Peace of Utrecht had, indeed, restored to France some towns which the earlier treaty had reserved for the Dutch barrier, but, to the great indignation of the Emperor, it provided that such a barrier should be secured. As the war was still going on, France, in accordance with the treaty, surrendered the Spanish Netherlands provisionally to Holland, to be transferred by her to Austria, as soon as peace should have been restored and the conditions and limits of the barrier arranged. A long, tedious, and irritating negotiation ensued between the Dutch and the Emperor, but it was at last, chiefly through English mediation, concluded in November 1715. The treaty which was then signed, and confirmed by England, gave Holland the exclusive right of garrisoning Namur, Tournay, Menin, Furnes, Warneton, Ypres, and the fort of Knocke. The garrison of Dendermonde was to

[1] Art v.

be a joint one. A sum of 500,000 crowns, levied on what were now the Austrian Netherlands, was to be annually paid by the Emperor to the Dutch for the support of the Dutch garrisons in the barrier towns, and several provisions were made regulating the number of the troops to be maintained, the municipal arrangements, and the religious liberty to be conceded. To the Emperor, who claimed an absolute right over the whole Spanish dominions, this arrangement was very irksome, and there was a strong ill-feeling between the Austrians and the Dutch, which by no means subsided on the conclusion of the treaty. A divided sovereignty almost necessarily led to constant difficulties. One of the Powers was despotic, the other was rather notoriously minute and punctilious in its exactions. There were violent disputes between the inhabitants of the newly annexed territory and the Dutch on the question of commercial privileges. There were disputes about the frontiers. There were bitter complaints of the subsidy to the Dutch, and it was found necessary for the three Powers to make another convention, which was executed in December 1718, and which in several small details modified the treaty of 1715.

Another and a much more serious danger arose from the relations between Austria and Spain. We have seen that when the Emperor at the time of the Peace of Utrecht resolved to continue the war, he determined, if possible, to contract its limits to the Rhine; and he accordingly concluded with England and France a treaty of neutrality for Spain, Italy, and the Low Countries, and withdrew the Austrian troops from Catalonia and the islands of Majorca and Ivica. The short war that ensued was a war with France, and the Peace of Baden was negotiated between the Emperor and the French King, but no formal peace had ever been established between the Emperor and the King of Spain. The Emperor still refused to recognise the title of Philip to the Spanish throne. Philip still maintained his claims to the kingdom of Naples, the Milanese, and the Spanish Netherlands, which the Peace of Utrecht had transferred to Austria. War might at any time break out, and the chief pledge of peace lay in the exhaustion of both belligerent parties, in the difficulties in which the Emperor was involved with the Turks, and in the guarantees which England, France,

and Holland had given for the maintenance of the chief arrangements of the peace. In May 1716 when the relations between England and France were still uncertain, a defensive alliance had been contracted between England and the Emperor, by which each Power guaranteed the dominions of the other in case of an attack by any Power except the Turks, and, by an additional and secret article subsequently signed, each Power agreed to expel from its territory the rebel subjects of the other. Of the arrangements of the Peace of Utrecht, one of the most obnoxious to the Emperor was that which made the Duke of Savoy King of Sicily, with reversion of the kingdom of Spain in the event of a failure of male issue of Philip. The Austrian statesmen maintained that the kingdom of Naples never would be secure so long as Sicily was in the hands of a foreign and perhaps a hostile Power; and they soon engaged in secret negotiations with England and France to induce or compel the Duke of Savoy to exchange Sicily for Sardinia. The project became known, and both the Duke of Savoy and the King of Spain were determined to resist it. On the other hand, a strange transformation had passed over the spirit and tendency of the Spanish Government. The first wife of Philip, who was a daughter of the Duke of Savoy, died in February 1714-15, and, a few months after, the King married Elizabeth Farnese, the young Princess of Parma—a bold and aspiring woman, who was bitterly hostile to the Austrian dominion in Italy, and who had some claims to the succession of Parma, Placentia, and Tuscany. The sovereign of the first two Duchies had no son. The Queen of Spain was his niece, and she claimed the succession as a family inheritance, but her title was disputed by both the Emperor and the Pope. The Grand Duke of Tuscany had a son, but this son was without issue, and was separated from his wife, and the succession was claimed by Elizabeth Farnese, by the Emperor, and by the wife of the Elector Palatine. The anxiety of the Spanish Queen to claim this inheritance was greatly intensified by the birth of a son. She soon obtained an absolute dominion over the mind of the King, and her own policy was completely governed by an Italian priest, who, probably, only needed somewhat more favourable circumstances to have played a part in the world in no degree inferior to that of Richelieu or Chatham.

Cardinal Alberoni is one of the most striking of the many examples of the great value of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical organisation in forming a ladder by which men of genius can climb from the lowest positions to great dignity and influence. The son of a very poor and very illiterate gardener at Placentia, he was born in 1664, was taught to read and write by the charity of a parish priest, and having entered the order of the Barnabites and passed through the lowest forms of ecclesiastical drudgery, he was at length, with considerable difficulty, raised to the priesthood, and became in time chaplain to the bishop of his diocese, and canon in its cathedral. By the friendship of another bishop he was brought to the Court of the reigning Duke of Parma, where he was introduced in 1702 to the Duke of Vendome, who was then commanding the French army in Italy, and whose warm attachment laid the foundation of his future success. Few men without any advantage either of birth or fortune have ever risen to great political eminence without drinking deeply of the cup of moral humiliation; and St. Simon, whose aristocratic leanings made him regard the low-born adventurer with peculiar malevolence, assures us, probably with some truth, that Alberoni first won the favour of Vendome by gross sycophancy and buffoonery. His small round figure, surmounted by a head of wholly disproportioned size, gave him at first sight a burlesque appearance. His language and habits were very coarse, and he possessed to the highest degree the supple and insinuating manners, the astute judgment, the patient, flexible, and intriguing temperament of his country and of his profession. But with these qualities he combined others of a very different order. He was the most skilful, laborious, and devoted of servants. His imagination teemed with grand and daring projects, and in energy of action and genius of organisation very few statesmen have equalled him. For a time everything seemed to smile upon him. He was employed by the Duke of Parma in negotiations with the Emperor. He was presented by Vendome to Lewis XIV. He obtained a French pension; he accompanied Vendome in his brilliant Spanish campaign; he became the envoy of the Duke of Parma at the Spanish Court, and having taken a leading part in negotiating the second marriage of the

King, he acquired a complete ascendancy over the Queen and directed Spanish policy for some time before he became ostensibly Prime Minister of Spain. His whole soul was filled with a passionate desire to free his native country from Austrian thraldom, to raise Spain from the chronic decrepitude and debility into which she had sunk, and to make her, once more, the Spain of Isabella and of Charles V. The task was a Herculean one, for the national spirit had been for generations steadily declining. The finances were all but ruined, and corruption, maladministration, and superstition had corroded all the energies of the State. The firm hand of a great statesman was, however, soon felt in every department. Amid a storm of unpopularity, corrupt and ostentatious expenditure was rigidly cut down. The nobles and clergy were compelled to contribute their share to taxation; the army was completely reorganised; a new and powerful navy was created. Pampeluna, Barcelona, Cadiz, Ferrol, and several minor strongholds were strengthened. The numerous internal custom-houses, which restricted inland trade, were, with some violence to local customs and to provincial privileges, summarily abolished. The lucrative monopoly of tobacco, which had been alienated from the State, and grossly abused, was resumed. Great pains were taken to revive agriculture and extend manufactures; in spite of the national hostility to heretics, Dutch manufacturers, and even English dyers, were brought over to Spain; and the improvement effected was so rapid that Alberoni boasted, with much reason, that five years of peace would be sufficient to raise Spain to an equality with the greatest nations of the earth.

At first he was very favourable to the English alliance, and through his influence an advantageous commercial treaty was negotiated between England and Spain in 1715. Soon, however, the two Governments rapidly diverged. The treaty of mutual defence, made between the Emperor and England in 1716, was a great blow to Spanish policy, and the Triple Alliance in the following year was a still greater one. An attempt to expel the Austrians from Italy without the assistance of France, and in the face of the hostility of England, appeared hopeless. Alberoni would have at least postponed the enterprise, but his hand was forced. He was surrounded with ene-

mies, and could only maintain his position by constant address and audacity. The Queen, on whom he mainly depended, wished for war. The proceedings of the Emperor about Sicily, and the arrest of the Grand Inquisitor of Spain on his journey through Milan, exasperated the Spanish Court; and the Turkish war, which had recently broken out, seemed to furnish a favourable opportunity. In 1715 the Turks, on the most frivolous pretexts, had broken the Peace of Carlowitz, had declared war with the Venetians, had conquered the Morea, and laid siege to Corfu, and the Emperor, having drawn the sword in defence of his ally, the war was now raging in Hungary. The position of Alberoni at this time became a very difficult one. The Pope was summoning all Catholic Powers to the defence of Christendom, and threatened severe spiritual penalties against all who attacked the Emperor while engaged in the holy war. Alberoni was himself a priest, and he was at the head of a nation which was passionately superstitious, and beyond all others the hereditary enemy of the Mohammedan. He accordingly professed himself ready to assist in the defence of the Christian interests, made great naval preparations ostensibly for that purpose, and obtained his Cardinal's hat chiefly by a show of zeal in the cause, but at the same time there is little doubt that he was secretly both encouraging and aiding Turkish invasion. His hopes, however, were in a great degree disappointed. Schulenburg, one of the ablest of the military adventurers who in the eighteenth century lent their services in succession to many different nations, commanded the Venetians at Corfu, and after a terrible siege, and in spite of prodigies of undisciplined valour,[1] the Turks were obliged to abandon their enterprise with the loss of about 17,000 men, of 56 cannon, of all their magazines and tents. Nearly at the same time, Eugene, at the head of an army far inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, completely routed them in the great battle of Peterwardein, drove them beyond the frontier of Hungary, secured the possession of the Banat, and laid siege to Belgrade. The Austrian forces were, however, for a considerable time arrested, and at the time

[1] 'Il ne manque à ces gens-là que l'ordre et la discipline militaire et ils nous battroient tous.'—Schulenberg to Leibnitz. Kemble's *State Papers*, p. 540.

when the Spaniards began their contest, a considerable proportion of them were employed in that quarter. Alberoni at the same time was indefatigable in efforts to raise up allies, or to paralyse the Powers which were hostile to him. He obtained a promise of assistance from the Duke of Savoy by offering him the Milanese instead of Sicily. He intrigued alike with the discontented party in Hungary, in Naples, and in the Cevennes. He met the hostility of the Regent by reviving the claims of Philip to the eventual succession of the French crown, and supporting the party of the Duke of Maine, who was opposed to the Regent and to the English alliance, and who desired to follow the policy of Lewis XIV. He endeavoured to intimidate England into neutrality by suspending the commercial privileges that had been granted her, and by threatening to support the Jacobite cause with a Spanish army.

Another and still more gigantic project, if it was not originated, was at least warmly supported by him. The North of Europe had long been convulsed by the contest between Charles XII. of Sweden and Peter the Great, the two most ambitious monarchs of the age. Goertz, the minister of the former—a bold, adventurous, and unscrupulous man—now conceived the idea of negotiating a peace and an alliance between these two sovereigns, and of making them the arbiters of the North. In order to make this peace it was necessary for Charles to relinquish to Russia the Baltic provinces which had so long been in dispute, but he could obtain compensations on the side of Denmark, Norway, and Germany, and he could gratify his long-continued resentment against the King of Poland and the Elector of Hanover. His animosity against the latter dates from the time when George, without provocation, had joined the confederation against him, and had annexed to his German dominions Bremen and Verden. On other grounds the Czar fully shared his hatred of the English King. George had watched with great and unconcealed jealousy the incursions of the Czar into Germany, and his growing power on the Baltic. He had prevented, by the threat of war, a Russian expedition against Mecklenburg in 1716, and he had refused to permit a canal, from which the Czar expected great commercial advantages, to pass through a small part of his German dominions. Through combined

motives of policy and resentment, the Czar lent a willing ear to the project of the Swedish minister, while Charles threw himself into it with characteristic ardour. His plan was to wrest from Denmark and Hanover the conquests they had made, to ruin the Hanoverian power, to replace Augustus by Stanislaus on the throne of Poland, to invade England or Scotland in person with a Swedish army transported in Russian ships, and to change the whole tenour of English policy by a restoration of the Stuarts. It was a scheme well fitted to fascinate that wild imagination, and it was full of danger to England. A very small army of disciplined soldiers would probably have turned the scale against the Government in 1715, and Charles was a great master of the art of war, and he was free from the taint of Catholicism, which in general so fatally weakened the Jacobite cause. The great difficulty lay in the poverty of the two sovereigns; but Alberoni, whose influence was actively employed in promoting the alliance, strained every nerve to supply the funds. Peter, in a journey to France, tried to induce France to join against England, but the Regent was steadily loyal to the English alliance, and it is said to have been through his spies that the English ministers were first informed of the plot that was preparing. Letters were intercepted, which disclosed the design. The Government promptly arrested Gyllenborg, the Swedish ambassador at St. James's, while, at the instigation of England, the Dutch arrested Goertz, who was in Holland concocting the plans of the future expedition. The Spanish ambassador protested against these proceedings as a violation of the laws of nations, but the letters found in the possession of Gyllenborg furnished such decisive evidence that no other Power joined him. The Czar, who was not implicated in the correspondence, protested his friendship to England. The King of Sweden took refuge in a haughty silence, but retaliated by throwing the English envoy into prison. The disclosure of the plot rendered its execution more difficult, but by no means averted the danger which, partly through the intrigues of Alberoni, hung over the fortunes of England.

The arrest of the Swedish ambassador took place on January 29, 1716-17. In the following summer a Spanish fleet sailed from Barcelona. Though its destination was uncertain, it was

most generally believed that it was intended to act against the Turks, and all Europe was startled to hear that on August 22 (N.S.) it had swept down upon Sardinia, that a large body of Spanish troops had landed and invested Cagliari, and that they were advancing rapidly in the conquest of the island. After about two months of hard fighting the conquest was achieved, and the Austrian flag had everywhere disappeared. The perplexity of the Great Powers was very serious. Though no peace had been made between the Emperor and the Spanish King, hostilities had been dormant and the act of Alberoni kindled a new war. The Pope strongly denounced the conduct of a statesman who attacked a Christian Power while engaged in wars with Mohammedans. England had guaranteed the Austrian dominions in Italy, and, supported by France and Holland, she laboured earnestly to bring about a definite peace between the Empire and Spain. Alberoni consented to negotiate, but at the same time he actively armed. Statesmen who had looked upon the Spanish power as almost effete, saw with bewilderment the new forces that seemed to start into life, as beneath the enchanter's wand. A fleet such as Spain had hardly equalled since the destruction of the Armada was equipped. Catalonia had been hitherto bitterly hostile to the Bourbon dynasty, but Alberoni boldly threw himself upon the patriotism and the martial ardour of its people, summoned them around the Spanish flag, and formed six new regiments of the Catalonian mountaineers. Many years later the elder Pitt dealt in a precisely similar way with the Jacobite clans in the Highlands of Scotland, and the success of this measure is justly regarded as one of the great proofs of the high quality of his statesmanship. By a skilful and strictly honest management of the finances, by a rigid economy in all the branches of unnecessary expenditure, it was found possible to make the most formidable preparations without imposing any very serious additional burden upon the people, while at the same time Spanish diplomacy was active and powerful from Stockholm to Constantinople.

Hitherto fortune had for the most part favoured Alberoni, but the scale now turned, and a long succession of calamities blasted his prospects. His design was to pass at once from Sardinia into the kingdom of Naples in conjunction with the

new sovereign of Sicily; but, within a few days of the landing of the Spaniards in Sardinia, Eugene had completely defeated the Turks in a great battle at Belgrade, and the capture of that town enabled the Emperor to secure Naples by a powerful reinforcement. The defection of the King of Sicily speedily followed. The whole career of Victor Amadeus had been one of sagacious treachery, and, without decisively abandoning the Spaniards or committing himself to the Austrians, he was now secretly negotiating with the Emperor. Alberoni knew or suspected the change, and met it with equal art and with superior energy. He still professed a warm friendship for the Savoy prince. A Spanish fleet of 22 ships of the line with more than 300 transports, and carrying no less than 33,000 men, was now afloat in the Mediterranean; and, at a time when Victor Amadeus imagined it was about to descend upon Naples, it unexpectedly attacked Sicily, which was left almost undefended, and a Spanish army under the command of the Marquis of Lede, captured Palermo, and speedily overran almost the whole island. This, however, was the last gleam of success. In July 1718, the very month in which the Spaniards landed in Sicily, the war between the Austrians and the Turks was concluded, chiefly through English mediation, by the Peace of Passarowitz; the Austrian frontier was extended far into Servia and Wallachia, and the whole Austrian forces were liberated. England had long been negotiating in order to obtain peace in Italy, or, failing in this end, to form an alliance which would overpower the aggressor, and she succeeded in at least attaining the latter end by inducing Austria and France to join her in what, under the expectation of the accession of the Dutch, was called the Quadruple Alliance, for the purpose of maintaining the Peace of Utrecht, and guaranteeing the tranquillity of Europe. It was concluded in the beginning of July but not signed till the beginning of August. By this most important measure, the Emperor at last reluctantly agreed to renounce his pretensions to the kingdom of Spain, and to all other parts of the Spanish dominions recognised as such by the Peace of Utrecht. Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia were acknowledged to be male fiefs of the Empire, but the Emperor engaged that their sovereignty, on the death of the reigning princes, should pass to Don Carlos, the son of the Spanish Queen and to his successors, subject to the reservation of

Leghorn as a free port, and also to the condition that the crowns of these Duchies should never pass to the sovereign of Spain. To secure the succession of Don Carlos, Swiss garrisons, paid by the three contracting or mediating Powers, were to be placed in the chief towns. On the other hand, Philip was to be compelled to renounce his pretensions to the Netherlands, to the two Sicilies, and to the Duchy of Milan; Victor Amadeus was to cede Sicily to the Emperor in exchange for Sardinia, while, as a compensation for the sacrifice thus made, the Emperor acknowledged the succession of the House of Savoy to the Spanish throne, in the event of the failure of the issue of Philip. The contracting Powers agreed by separate and secret articles that if in three months the sovereigns of Spain and Sicily did not notify their assent to these conditions, the whole force of the allied potentates was to be employed against them, and that even within this interval they would support the Emperor if any attack was made on his Italian dominions.

The very favourable terms which were offered by this alliance to the Spanish Government show how formidable the situation had become. The English Government, at the advice of Stanhope, even went so far, in their anxiety for peace, as secretly to offer Spain the restoration of Gibraltar. The refusal of these terms was the master error of Alberoni, and the sacrifice of such considerable positive advantages, in pursuit of a policy which could only succeed by a concurrence of many favourable circumstances, showed more the spirit of a daring gambler than of a great statesman. The blame has been thrown exclusively upon Alberoni, though it is probable that part, at least, should fall on those upon whose favour he depended. At the time when the terms were first offered, the expedition against Sicily was prepared, the Spaniards were sanguine of being able to organise such a fleet as would give them the command of the Mediterranean, and there was some reasonable prospect of re-establishing the Spanish dominion in Italy. The Pope was at this time violently hostile to Spain, and the combination of forces against it secured by the Quadruple Alliance appeared at first sight irresistible, but there were many considerations which served to weaken it. Holland was only desirous of peace, and as long as the war was confined to the Mediterranean it was

very improbable that she would take any active part in it. The alliance of France with England against the grandson of Lewis XIV. was utterly opposed to French traditions and to French feeling. The health of the young King was very precarious. His death would probably be followed by a disputed succession, and during his lifetime there was a strong party opposed to the Regent. If, as there was some reason to anticipate, this party triumphed, France would immediately disappear from the alliance, and her weight would pass into the Spanish scale. England had taken the most energetic part in the negotiation, and she looked with great jealousy on the formidable navy which had arisen in the Spanish waters; but in this case also everything depended on the continuance of a tottering dynasty, and if the great Northern alliance burst upon her, her resources would be abundantly occupied at home. Such were probably the calculations of the Spanish Court, and the successes in Sicily, and the safe arrival of a fleet of galleons bringing a large supply of gold from the colonies strengthened its determination. The result was the utter ruin of the reviving greatness of Spain. On August 22 the British fleet, commanded by Admiral Byng, attacked, and, after a desperate encounter, almost annihilated, the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro, in the neighbourhood of Syracuse. The Spaniards complained bitterly that this step had been taken without a declaration of war, when the three months allowed by the Quadruple Alliance had but just begun; but it was answered with reason that the invasion of Sicily clearly endangered the territorial arrangements that had been made by the allied powers, and that Stanhope had fully warned Alberoni that no such act would be permitted by England. In the beginning of November, Victor Amadeus acceded to the Quadruple Alliance, and all hope of assistance in that quarter was at an end. In December a ball fired from the obscure Norwegian fortress of Frederikshall cut down Charles XII., in the very flower of his age, when he was just about to organise his expedition against England. No more terrible blow could have fallen on the Spanish statesman. The Government which followed, at once reversed the policy of Charles. Goertz was brought to the scaffold. The Czar made no attempt to execute the project which his rival had begun, and in the following

year a treaty was made between Hanover and Sweden, by which, in consideration of a money payment, the cession of Bremen and Verden to the former was fully recognised.

Nor was this all. Alberoni, with characteristic daring, endeavoured, even after the death of Charles, to strike down the hostile Governments both in France and England. The strong party in France which was opposed to the English alliance had formed the bold design of seizing the person of the Regent, carrying him prisoner into Spain, and conferring the regency upon Philip, who was content that the power should be actually exercised by the Duke of Maine. The Duke, or rather the Duchess, was at the head of the conspiracy, which comprised several men of great importance and influence. The most conspicuous were the Cardinal de Polignac, the well-known author of the 'Anti-Lucrèce,' who had received a Cardinal's hat through the influence of the Pretender, and had represented France in the conferences of Gertruydenberg and of Utrecht; the young Duke of Richelieu, famous alike for his courage and his intrigues, who promised to place Bayonne, where he was garrisoned, in the hands of the Spaniards, and to head a rising in the South; the Comte de Laval, a man of great energy and influence, who was devotedly attached to the Duchess of Maine; and the Marquis of Pompadour, who was a passionate worshipper of the memory and the policy of the late King. All the more ardent followers of Lewis XIV. had seen with great indignation the accession of France to the Quadruple Alliance negotiated by England against Spain. The complete reversal of French policy was, undoubtedly, distasteful to the whole nation, and the Regent was personally unpopular, both with the nobles and with the people. His authority was of very doubtful legitimacy, for he had completely disregarded the restrictions on the regency imposed by the will of the late King, and had also deprived the Duke of Maine of the position of guardian to the young sovereign, which Lewis had assigned him. He was accused, though, no doubt, untruly, of having poisoned the late Dauphin, and of meditating the death of the feeble boy who stood between him and the throne; and, with much more justice, of having in foreign affairs sacrificed to his own personal interest the national and traditional policy of France. The

ascendency of Dubois, and the growing influence of Law, excited many jealousies. Brittany had been brought by fiscal oppression to the verge of revolt, and, if the plot succeeded, there was no doubt that the Parliament of Paris would gladly pronounce the renunciation of Philip to be invalid, and declare him to be the next heir to the French throne. Alberoni threw himself ardently into the conspiracy, and the Spanish ambassador and a Spanish priest named Portocarrero, a relative of the famous cardinal, minister of Charles II., took a leading part in organising it. It was, however, soon discovered. Intercepted letters revealed its nature and extent. The Duke and Duchess of Maine and the other leading conspirators were imprisoned or exiled. A violent rupture had just at this time taken place between the Spanish minister and the French ambassador at Madrid, and the latter had hastily left the capital, and with great difficulty reached the frontier. The Spanish ambassador at Paris was arrested, and papers of the most compromising description having been found in his possession he was conducted speedily under escort to Blois. The revolt in Brittany, which suddenly broke out, was extinguished before the Spanish fleet sent to its assistance could be of any avail, and the Regent and the King of England almost simultaneously declared war against Spain.

The Cardinal was equally unfortunate in his measures against England. The death of Charles XII. seemed to have blasted every hope of, at this time, overthrowing the Hanoverian dynasty; but Alberoni still presented a bold front to his enemies, and his courage only rose the higher as the tempest darkened around his path. Despairing of assistance from the North, he resolved to place himself at the head of English Jacobitism, and to make one more effort to paralyse his most formidable opponent. He invited the Pretender to Madrid. With an energy really wonderful after the events in the Mediterranean, he collected a small fleet of men-of-war, with some twenty transports, at Cadiz, embarked about 5,000 men, and despatched them, with arms for 30,000 more, to raise the Jacobites in Scotland. Ormond was to join the expedition, as commander, at Corunna. But French spies discovered the plan. The French Government sent speedy information to

that of England, and the ministers took precautions that showed their sense of the magnitude of the danger. Fearing the inadequacy of their own resources, they invited over Austrian and Dutch troops from the Netherlands for the protection of England. The fleet was hastily equipped, and a reward of 10,000*l.* was offered for the apprehension of Ormond. But the danger had already passed. A great storm in the Bay of Biscay scattered and ruined the Spanish fleet, and the captains deemed themselves only too happy if they could conduct their dismantled and disabled vessels back to some Spanish port. Two ships, containing 300 Spanish soldiers and a few Scotch nobles, outrode the tempest, and reached Scotland in safety, where they were joined by about 2,000 Highlanders. For a time they evaded pursuit, and even notice, in the mountain fastnesses, but on June 10 they were attacked in the valley of Glenshiel and easily crushed.

All hope was now over: Spain had not an ally in the world; her navy was annihilated; three of the greatest European Powers were combined against her; her best army was penned up in Sicily, and she could not enroll more than 15,000 men for her own defence when a French army of 40,000 men, under the command of Berwick, had penetrated into her territory. Berwick, by the great victory of Almanza, had formerly contributed largely to place the sceptre in the hand of Philip. He was the illegitimate son of James II., and, therefore, the brother of the prince whom Philip was now endeavouring to place upon the throne of England, and one of his own sons had entered into the Spanish service, and had been rewarded by a Spanish dukedom. He was, however, beyond all things a soldier, and an almost stoical sentiment of military duty subdued every natural affection. He accepted without hesitation the command which had been refused by Villars, invaded Navarre, subdued the whole province of Guipuscoa, burnt the arsenal and the ships of war that were building at Passages, and afterwards attacked Catalonia. The arsenal of Santona was destroyed; an English squadron harrassed the Spanish coast, and a detachment of English soldiers stormed and captured Vigo. The Austrian army drove the now isolated army in Sicily, after a brave, and in one instance, successful, resistance, from all its

posts. Nothing remained but submission, and there was one sacrifice which would make it comparatively easy. All classes now turned their resentment against Alberoni. The jealousy of the nobles, the anger of the provinces at his violent reforms and his neglect of provincial privileges, the arrogance which power and overstrained nerves had produced, the patriotic indignation springing from the disasters he had brought upon Spain had made him bitterly unpopular, and numerous intrigues were hastening his inevitable downfall. The influence of the Regent and of Dubois, the influence of Peterborough, who was then in close communication with the Duke of Parma, the influence of the King's confessor, and the influence of the Queen's nurse, were all made use of, and they soon succeeded. On December 5, 1719, he received an order dismissing him from all his employments, and banishing him from the Spanish soil. Many of the Spanish nobles showed him in this hour of his disgrace a rare consideration, but the King and Queen refused even to see him, and a letter which he wrote remained wholly unnoticed. On his way to the frontier he was arrested, and some important papers which he had appropriated were taken back to Madrid. He was conducted through France, and sailed from thence to Italy, exclaiming bitterly against the ingratitude of the sovereigns he had so long and so faithfully served.

He intended to proceed to Rome, but Pope Clement XI., whom he had deeply offended, forbade him to enter it, and for some time he lived in complete concealment. A copy of the Imitation of St. Thomas à Kempis, which shows by its marginal notes that it was at this time his constant companion, was long preserved in the Ducal Library of Parma. The hostility of the Spanish Court pursued him, and there were even some steps taken towards depriving him of his cardinal's hat. On the death, however, of Clement XI. he was invited to assist at the conclave, and, after a short period of seclusion in a monastery, he was admitted into warm favour by Innocent XIII. On the death of that Pope he received ten votes in the conclave. He quarrelled with Benedict XIII., and was obliged during his pontificate to leave Rome, but he returned to high favour under Clement XII.; was appointed legate at Ravenna, where he distinguished himself by his great works of

drainage, and also by a furious quarrel with the little State of San Mariño, and was afterwards removed to the legation of Bologna. He at last retired from affairs, and died in 1752 at the great age of eighty-eight, bequeathing the bulk of his fortune to the foundation of a large institution near Placentia for the education of his needy fellow citizens.[1]

So ended a career which was certainly one of the most remarkable of the eighteenth century. Had there been more of moral principle and less of the recklessness of a gambler in the nature of Alberoni he would have deserved to rank among the greatest of statesmen. He was, however, singularly unfortunate in the latter part of his public life, and his fall was, with good reason, a matter of rejoicing throughout Europe. Perhaps no part of his history is more curiously significant than its close. We can hardly have a more striking illustration of the decline of the theological spirit in Europe than the fact that the Pope was unable to restrain a Christian nation from attacking the Emperor when engaged in the defence of Christendom against the Turks; that the nation which perpetrated this, which a few generations before would have been deemed the most inexpiable of all crimes, was Spain, under the guidance of a cardinal of the Church, and that that cardinal lived to be the favourite and the legate of the Pope.

With the dismissal of Alberoni the troubles of Europe gradually subsided. Philip, after a short negotiation, acceded to the Quadruple Alliance, and Sicily and Sardinia were speedily evacuated. Many difficulties of detail, however, and many hesitations remained, and the negotiations still dragged slowly on for some years. A congress was held at Cambray in 1724, and several new treaties of alliance were made confirming or elucidating the Quadruple Alliance. The singular good fortune of the Whig ministry during the struggle I have described

[1] See the *Hist. du Cardinal Alberoni* (1719) by J. Rousset; the notices of Alberoni in the *Memoirs* of St. Simon and Duclos, and in the *Letters of the President de Brosses*; his own apologies printed in the *Nouvelle Biographie Generale* (art. 'Alberoni'); the Stanhope correspondence, in the appendix to the second volume of Lord Stanhope's *History of England*; Voltaire's *Hist. de Charles XII.*, and especially the admirable history of Alberoni in Coxe's *Memoirs* of the Spanish Kings of the House of Bourbon, vol. ii. In private life Alberoni seems to have been irreproachable, and many of the charges St. Simon and others have brought against him have been successfully refuted.

is very evident. The Hanoverian policy of the King on the question of Bremen and Verden had exposed England to a danger of the most serious kind; and, but for the premature death of Charles XII., and the steady, unwavering loyalty of the French Regent to an alliance which was entirely opposed to the traditions of French policy, it might easily have proved fatal to the dynasty. The general result of the foreign policy of England was undoubtedly very favourable to the Whig cause. The Whig party completed the work which the Peace of Utrecht had left unfulfilled; the commanding position which England occupied in the course of the struggles that have been related, and the very large amount of success she achieved, added to the reputation of the country; the pacification of Europe, and especially the alliance with France, withdrew from the Jacobites all immediate prospect of foreign assistance, and without such assistance it was not likely that Jacobite insurgents could successfully encounter disciplined armies. Several clouds, it is true, still hung upon the horizon. In the North the storm of war raged for some time after it was appeased in the South. An alliance had been made between Sweden and England. By the mediation of the latter, Sweden made in turn treaties of peace with Hanover, Prussia, Denmark, and Poland; but the war with the Czar continued, and the coast, in spite of the presence of a British fleet, was fearfully devastated. Peace was at last made in this quarter at Nystadt in September 1721, on terms extremely favourable to Russia and extremely disastrous to Sweden. A bitter jealousy had arisen between the Empire and the maritime Powers on account of the Ostend Company, established by the former, to trade with the East Indies. The question of the cession of Gibraltar to Spain, which had been imprudently raised during the late war, continued in a very unsatisfactory state. The obscure and secret negotiation which had at that time been carried on, partly through the intervention of the French Regent, led, as might have been expected, to grave misunderstanding. The English Government maintained that the offer had been made only in order to avert war with Spain, and that the hostilities which followed annulled it. The Spanish Government treated the offer as unconditional, and declared that as soon as peace was restored England

was bound to cede the fortress. The French Regent, through whose hands some of the negotiations passed, on the whole, supported the Spanish demand. Much negotiation on the subject took place. Propositions were made for an exchange of Gibraltar for Florida, but they found no favour with the Spanish Court. Stanhope, though apparently willing to cede Gibraltar, soon perceived that the English Parliament would never consent, and there was much agitation in the country at the suspicions that such a project had been entertained. But George I., who appears to have been perfectly indifferent to Gibraltar, wrote a letter to the King of Spain in June 1721, which afterwards gave rise to very grave complications. Having spoken of the prospect of a cordial union between the two nations, he added, 'I do no longer balance to assure your Majesty of my readiness to satisfy you with regard to your demand touching the restitution of Gibraltar, promising you to make use of the first favourable opportunity to regulate this article with the assent of my Parliament.' This letter, which was for some years kept secret, was very naturally regarded as a full admission of the claims of the Spanish King, and, as we shall see, it hereafter led to serious dangers.[1] The temporary abdication of Philip in favour of his son in 1724 gave rise to some new and dangerous complications; and in the same year Ripperda greatly modified the foreign policy of Spain, and brought matters to the verge of a general war. Still for some years the world enjoyed a real though a precarious peace, and the firm alliance between England and France, which gave security to Western Europe, enabled the Whig party in England to consolidate its power, and the Hanoverian dynasty to strike its roots somewhat deeper in the English soil.

The violent hostility of the Church party to the Government was at the same time slowly subsiding, and the influence of the Church itself was diminished. The persistent Catholicism of the Pretender, the Latitudinarian or Low Church appointments of the Government and the great increase of religious scepticism modified the state of Church feeling. The causes of the religious

[1] See on this negotiation Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, i. 304–309; Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, 362–365; Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 306, 310. In 1727 a motion to produce this letter was negatived in the Commons (Jan. 23), but in March, 1729, when George II. was on the throne, it was laid before Parliament. See *Parl. Hist.* viii. 547, 695.

scepticism of the eighteenth century I shall hereafter examine, but it may here be noticed how very different at different times are the effects of scepticism upon the spirit of Churches. When it is not very violent, aggressive, or dogmatic, and when it produces no serious convulsion in society, its usual tendency is to lower enthusiasm and to diminish superstition. Men become half-believers. Strong religious passions of all kinds die away. The more superstitious elements of religious systems are toned down, unrealised, and silently dropped, and there is a tendency to dwell exclusively upon the moral aspects of the faith. On the other hand, when religious scepticism has advanced much farther, has assumed a much more radical and uncompromising form, and governs a much larger proportion of the strongest minds, it frequently, for a time at least, intensifies both the superstition and the fanaticism of Churches. Sensitive and religious natures scared by destructive criticism which threatens the very foundations of their belief, throw themselves, by a natural reaction, into the arms of superstition, and ecclesiastical influence in Churches predominates just in proportion as the more masculine lay intellects cease to take any interest in their concerns. Thus in the present day we find that over a great portion of the Continent the lay intellect is almost divorced from Catholicism. The class of mind that once followed Bossuet or Pascal now follows Voltaire or Comte, and the withdrawal from Church questions of the moderating and qualifying element has been one great cause of the Ultramontane type which Catholicism has generally assumed. Even in England it is, probably, no chance coincidence that, at a time when a religious scepticism far more searching and formidable than any of the eighteenth century is advancing rapidly through the fields of literature, history, and science, a large proportion of the intelligence of the religious teachers of the nation is expended in magnifying the thaumaturgic powers of Episcopalian clergymen and in discussing the clothes which they should wear.

The effect of the scepticism of the eighteenth century was chiefly of the former kind, and the evanescence of dogmatic zeal was very favourable to the Whig party. They were also, probably, assisted by the great Trinitarian controversy which had arisen under Anne and which continued far into the eigh-

teenth century. The problem of defining and defending a doctrine of the Trinity which should neither fall into Tritheism on the one side, or into Sabellianism on the other, occupied the attention of ecclesiastics, and contributed with other causes to divert them from speculations about the foundations of government. The writings of Hoadly, however, soon gave a new bent to their energies. This very able man, who possessed all the moral and intellectual qualities of a consummate controversialist, had for some years been rapidly acquiring the position which Burnet had before held in the Low Church ranks. His latitudinarianism, however, was of a more extreme and emphatic character, and he greatly surpassed Burnet in the incisive brilliancy of his controversial writing, though he was far inferior to him in learning and versatility, in depth and beauty of character, and in the discharge of his episcopal duties. He was first brought forward by Sherlock, who afterwards became one of his leading opponents. He had acquired some notoriety during the Sacheverell trial by the power and clearness with which he denounced the doctrine of passive obedience, and he became noted as a trenchant writer against the Tory party. The new Government, in the first year of its accession, promoted him to the bishopric of Bangor; and soon afterwards, in reply to some papers of the Nonjuror Hickes, he published his 'Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Nonjurors in Church and State,' in which he argued that all political power proceeded from the people, denied both the doctrine of Apostolical Succession and the necessity of being in connection with any particular Church, and asserted that sincerity is the one necessary requirement for the Christian profession. In March 1717 he preached before the King his famous sermon 'On the Kingdom of Christ,' in which he enunciated with great clearness and force doctrines subversive of the whole theory of the High Church party. Christ himself, he maintained, is the sole judge and lawgiver of the Christian Church. No human power has a right to impose spiritual tests or spiritual punishments. The true Church of Christ is not a visible organisation, but the sum of all, whether dispersed or united, who trust in Him; and all attempts by temporal rewards or punishments to induce men to believe or discard particular religious opinions are essentially repugnant to the Christian religion.

Probably no other sermon ever produced so voluminous a controversy, or excited in clerical circles so prolonged an agitation, but it is a significant fact that the movement appears to have been purely literary, and it was followed by no recurrence of the Sacheverell riots. The opinions of Hoadly were steadily growing among the educated classes, and Church fanaticism was somewhat subsiding throughout the country. The Government acted with a high hand and with undisguised partiality. Four royal chaplains who had written against Hoadly were deprived of their positions. The Lower House of Convocation, having drawn up a severe and elaborate remonstrance against the sermon of Hoadly, was prorogued, and though it still continued to be formally assembled with every Parliament, it obtained no royal licence enabling it to transact business for more than a century.

A great centre of opposition and a great seedplot of religious intolerance thus passed away. The sympathies of the lower clergy were in violent hostility to both the civil Government and the bishops, and their power over the country districts and over the universities rendered them most formidable. The course of events, however, had been flowing steadily against them. Public opinion was exasperated by the large proportion of Scotch Episcopalians who were concerned in the rebellion of 1715,[1] and by the appearance of more than one English Nonjuror clergyman upon the scaffold. The divisions of the clergy and the secularising tendencies of the time had done their work, and the suspension of the synodical action of the Church hardly created a murmur of agitation. Few representative bodies have ever fallen more unhonoured and unlamented. Atterbury, the most brilliant tribune, orator, and pamphleteer of the High Church party was deeply immersed in Jacobite conspiracies and was thrown into prison in 1722. Great efforts were made to raise a storm of enthusiasm in his favour. Pathetic pictures were exposed to view representing him looking through the bars of his prison. The London clergy showed their sympathies by having prayers for him in most of the churches, on the pretext that he was suffering from the gout. He lay for several months in prison,

[1] See the letters which Bishop Nicholson wrote from Carlisle to Archbishop Wake, describing the state of the prisoners collected there. Among them was a son of the Bishop of Edinburgh. — British Museum, Add. MSS. 6116.

and was then, by the violent measure of a bill of pains and penalties, deprived of his spiritual dignities and sent into exile. Twice before, within the memory of men who were still living, had English Governments attempted to strike down popular representatives of the Church, and on each occasion the blow had recoiled upon themselves. The prosecution of the seven bishops contributed more than any other single cause to shatter the dynasty of the Stuarts, and the impeachment of Sacheverell to ruin the great ministry of Godolphin. Under any circumstances a bill of pains and penalties, by which Parliament assumes the functions of a court of justice and condemns men against whom no sufficient legal evidence can be adduced, is an extreme, unconstitutional, and justly unpopular measure. So rapidly, however, had the ecclesiastical sentiment throughout England declined that the Whig ministry of George I. was able, without serious difficulty, by such a measure to deprive of his dignities and to banish from the country the most brilliant and popular bishop in the English Church.

This contrast is very marked, and it is all the more significant because the arrest and exile of Atterbury took place at a time when England seemed peculiarly ripe for agitation. The ruin, the poverty, the indignation which the failure of the South Sea Company had spread through every part of the kingdom had the natural effect of everywhere reviving political discontent. The birth of the Young Pretender in 1720 had rekindled the hopes of the Jacobites. It was noticed that when a gentleman named Stuart was chosen in 1721 Lord Mayor of London, the streets were filled on Lord Mayor's day by enthusiastic crowds shouting 'High Church and Stuart!' Soon after, information received from the French Regent, and corroborated by intercepted letters, revealed the existence of a most formidable Jacobite plot. An expedition was to have invaded England under the Duke of Ormond. A plan was made for seizing the Bank and the Tower. The design appeared so serious to the Government that the most stringent measures were taken. A camp was formed in Hyde Park, all military officers were ordered to repair at once to their commands, troops were brought over from Ireland, the King postponed his intended visit to Hanover, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for a year. Among those

who were arrested, in addition to Atterbury, on suspicion of high treason, were the Duke of Norfolk, the first peer of the realm, Lord North and Grey, Lord Orrery, and Dr. Friend the famous physician, who was also a Member of the House of Commons. A gentleman named Layer, who was tried and found guilty of enlisting soldiers for the Pretender, was hung and quartered; and bills of pains and penalties were carried, though not without much opposition, through both Houses, condemning a Jesuit named Plunket and a Nonjuror clergyman named Kelly to perpetual imprisonment and the forfeiture of their goods.[1] It was in this critical and anxious moment that the Government, by a similar method, struck down the prelate who was the special representative of the High Church party, and did so with a perfect impunity.[2]

These facts are sufficient to show the great change which, in less than a generation, had passed over ecclesiastical sentiment in England, and also, I hope, the means by which that change was effected. We may next proceed to examine the manner in which the dominant Whig party availed themselves of their opportunity to legislate on the subject of religious liberty; and, in order to do so with the greatest clearness, I propose to abandon for the present the strictly chronological order of events, and, adjourning the consideration of all other incidents, to devote the next few pages to exhibiting in a single picture the whole religious legislation in England during the reigns of the first two princes of the House of Brunswick. The class whose claims were most keenly felt by the Whig party were, of course, the ordinary Protestant Nonconformists. They had been, as we have seen, excluded by the Corporation Act of 1661, and by the Test Act of 1673, from all corporations and from all public offices, while the Occasional Conformity Act increased the stringency of the earlier legislation by excluding those moderate Dissenters who, while habitually adhering to the Nonconformist worship, had no scruple in occasionally communicating according to the Anglican rite.

[1] Tindal. The insertion of the forfeiture of goods into the bill against Plunket was believed to be done merely in order to form a precedent, as Plunket had no property. —See the protests of the Lords, in Rogers, i. 334–340.

[2] Tindal, Smollett, Coxe's *Walpole*, *Parl. Hist.* vol. viii. The guilt of Atterbury which was doubted by some has been fully proved by the publication of the Stuartpapers.

There can be no doubt that the sacramental test, besides its political results, had a very serious influence in lowering the religious sentiment of England. In most great Churches, and especially in Churches which are established by law, and in which liturgical forms are employed, the language of public worship is of a kind which can at most be appropriate to a very small fraction of those who use it. The customs of society draw within the Church men of all grades of piety and of faith. The selfish, the frivolous, the sceptical, the worldly, the indifferent, or at least men whose convictions are but half formed, whose zeal is very languid, and whose religious thoughts are very few, form the bulk of every congregation, and they are taught to employ language expressing the very ecstacy of devotion. The words that pass mechanically from their lips convey in turn the fervour of a martyr, the self-abasement or the rapture of a saint, a passionate confidence in the reality of unseen things, a passionate longing to pass beyond the veil. The effect of this contrast between the habitual language of devotion and the habitual dispositions of the devotees, between the energy of religious expression and the languor of religious conviction, is in some respects extremely deleterious. The sense of truth is dulled. Men come to regard it as a natural and scarcely censurable thing to attune their language on the highest of all subjects to a key wholly different from their genuine feelings and beliefs, and that which ought to be the truest of human occupations becomes in fact the most unreal and the most conventional.

In this manner a moral atmosphere is formed which is peculiarly fatal to sincerity and veracity of character, and which is in time so widely diffused that those who live in it are hardly conscious of its existence. But its influence on the religious sentiment would have been much more fatal had there not been an inner circle of devotion, a sanctuary of faith, which is comparatively intact. The reception of the Sacrament has, fortunately, never been, to any great extent, one of the requirements of the social code, and a rite which of all Christian institutions is the most admirable in its touching solemnity, has for the most part been left to sincere and earnest believers. Something of the fervour, something of the deep sincerity of the early

Christians may even now be seen around the sacred table, and prayers instinct with the deepest and most solemn emotion may be employed without appearing almost blasphemous by their contrast with the tone and the demeanour of the worshippers. This is not the place to relate how what was originally the simplest and most beautiful of commemorative rites was transformed, in the interests of sacerdotal pretensions, into the most grotesque and monstrous of superstitions, or how an institution intended to be the special symbol of Christian unity and affection was dragged into the arena of politics and controversy, was made the badge of parties, the occasion or the pretext of countless judicial murders. It is sufficient here to notice that the chief barrier against religious formalism in England was removed when the most sacred rite of the Christian religion was degraded into 'an office key, the picklock to a place,'[1] when the libertine, the placehunter, and the worldling were invited to partake in it for purposes wholly unconnected with religion. That this profanation should have been for a long period ardently defended by the clergy, and especially by that section of them whose principles led them to take the most exalted view of the nature of the Sacrament, is one of the most singular illustrations on record of the extent to which, in ecclesiastical bodies, the corporate interest of the Church may sometimes, even with good men, override the interests of religion. One of the most ardent advocates of the test was Swift, and in his 'Journal to Stella' he has given a vivid sketch of its practical working. 'I was early,' he writes, 'with the Secretary [Bolingbroke] but he was gone to his devotions and to receive the Sacrament. Several rakes did the same. It was not for piety but employment, according to Act of Parliament.'[2] It even became the general custom in the Church, for the minister, before celebrating the Communion, to desire the legal communicants, if there were any, to separate and divide themselves from those who were come there purely for the sake of devotion.[3]

[1] 'Hast thou by statute shoved from its design
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,
And made the symbols of atoning grace
An office key, a picklock to a place,
That infidels may make their title good
By an oath dipped in sacramental blood?'—*Cowper.*

[2] *Journal to Stella.*

[3] *Hist. of Parliament from the*

In this respect the history of the sacramental test has a very melancholy interest. Nor is it less remarkable when we consider its origin. The Corporation Act, indeed, was directed against Protestant Dissenters, but the Test Act, as is well known, was aimed exclusively against Catholics. It was enacted in 1673, at a time when the dread of Popery had almost reached its height. The King was gravely suspected. The heir to the throne had recently proclaimed himself a Catholic. The Government had combined with Lewis XIV. in war with Holland, the chief Protestant Power of the Continent. Charles II., by a bold and unconstitutional exercise of authority, had issued a declaration of indulgence suspending all penal laws against Nonconformists and against recusants, and it was clearly understood that the declaration was intended not only to enlarge the sphere of the royal prerogative, but also, and even more signally, to protect the Catholics. This disposition of the sovereign and of the heir to the throne, combined with the aggressive attitude of Catholicism on the Continent, and with several attempts that had been made to tamper with or overawe the constitutional guardians at home, had excited the keenest alarm, and the Test Act was introduced, in order to maintain the exclusion of Catholics from office by imposing a test which they would never take. That this was the object appears not only from the debate, but also from the very title of the Bill, which was described as 'an Act for preventing Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants.' The Dissenters who sat in Parliament exhibited on this occasion a rare and magnanimous disinterestedness. It was observed that the Act would operate against them as well as against the Catholics; but Alderman Love, who was one of their leading representatives, begged the House not to hesitate, through any considerations of this kind, to pass a measure which he believed to be essential to the maintenance of English liberty; and, trusting that special legislation would speedily relieve them from their disabilities, all the Dissenters in the House of Commons voted for the Bill.[1] The patriotism of the course which they

Death of Queen Anne to the Death of George II., p. 257. It is not surprising that the Speaker Onslow should have written, 'The sacramental test is made a sad and profane use of by others and many more, I fear, than the Dissenters. It is become a great scandal' (Note to Burnet, ii. 364).

[1] Burnet's *Own Times*, i. 347–348.

pursued was then fully recognised, and some attempts were made at the time to relieve them from a part of the burdens to which they were liable, but they were frustrated by the lateness of the session and by certain difficulties which had arisen in the House of Lords.

Such were the circumstances under which the Test Act was carried. That such a law, carried in such a manner, should have continued when the Revolution was firmly established, that it should have survived a period of forty-five years of unbroken Whig ascendancy, that it should have outlived the elder and have been defended by the younger Pitt, and that it should have been reserved for Lord John Russell to procure its repeal, is surely one of the most striking instances of national ingratitude in history. William, in whose reign, as Swift bitterly complained, the maxim had come into fashion 'that no man ought to be denied the liberty of serving his country upon account of a different belief in matters of speculative opinion,' had done everything in his power to procure the abolition of the test, but great majorities in Parliament defeated his intention. Stanhope had entertained the same desire, and such a measure actually formed part of a Bill which was carried through its second reading in 1718, but the opposition was so strong that the clauses referring to the Test and Corporation Acts were struck out in Committee; and the premature death of Stanhope prevented their speedy revival. The Dissenters were now organising rapidly with a view to obtaining relief; and Hoadly, Kennett, and several others of the more liberal Anglicans, seconded them; but Walpole, though he was personally favourable to the measure, and though the Dissenters had steadily supported him, shrank to the last from provoking a new ebullition of Church fanaticism. They at last lost patience, and had a measure for the repeal brought forward in 1736; but Walpole, in a very moderate and conciliatory speech, while expressing much sympathy for the Dissenters, pronounced the motion ill-timed, and, through the opposition of the Whig Government, it was thrown out by 251 to 123. The measure was again brought forward in 1739, at a time which seemed peculiarly favourable, for the Tory party had lately seceded from Parliament, leaving the conduct of affairs wholly in the hands of the Whigs. But the Government was still inflexible, and the

measure was defeated in an exclusively Whig House by 188 to 89. It was, probably, about this time that a deputation of Nonconformists, headed by Dr. Chandler, had an interview with Walpole, and remonstrated with him on the course he was pursuing in spite of his repeated assurances of good-will and his repeated intimations that he would some day assist in procuring the repeal. The minister, as usual, answered the deputation that, whatever were his private inclinations, the time had not arrived. 'You have so often returned this answer,' said Dr. Chandler, 'that I trust you will give me leave to ask when the time will come?' 'If you require a specific answer,' replied Walpole, with a somewhat imprudent candour, 'I will give it you in a word—never.'[1]

But although the dread of an ebullition of Church feeling like that which destroyed the great ministry of Godolphin induced the Whigs to maintain the Test Act, yet something was done to remove the reproach of intolerance from the English name. The Schism Act, which restricted the education of the Dissenters, and the Occasional Conformity Act, which was intended to restrict their political power, were both repealed in 1718; but, in order to prevent a repetition of the scandal which had been given by Sir Humphrey Edwin in the preceding reign, a clause was at the same time enacted providing that no mayor or bailiff or other magistrate should attend a meeting-house with the ensigns of office, under pain of being disqualified from holding any public office.[2] In the debates on this occasion Hoadly and Kennett were conspicuous in their advocacy of the Dissenters, but the Archbishops of Canterbury and York were both opposed to the repeal of the Acts of Anne. The Government silently favoured the Nonconformist interests by its steady promotion, both in Church and State, of Latitudinarians and Whigs. It secured the Protestant Dissenters in Ireland a Toleration Act considerably more liberal than that of England. It endeavoured, though without success, to free the Irish Dissenters from the Test Act, and it gradually relaxed the administration of the English Act to such a degree that it became almost nugatory. The original Act of Charles II. en-

[1] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 608. See too Doddridge's *Diary*, iii. 365–6.
[2] 5 George I. c. 4.

joined that every official should receive the Anglican Sacrament within three months after his admission into office, but the time of grace was extended under George I. to six months. Soon after, the policy was adopted of passing annual bills of indemnity in favour of those who had accepted office but had not taken the Sacrament within the required time. There is something in this device which is curiously characteristic of the course of English legislation, and especially of the policy of Walpole. The broad rule, that no one should hold office under the Crown without taking the Anglican Sacrament within six months of his accession, remained. The stigma upon the Dissenters was unremoved. The Indemnity Acts, on the face of them, had no reference to conscientious scruples, for they purported only to relieve those who 'through ignorance of the law, absence, or unavoidable accident' had omitted to qualify, and it was only by a very liberal interpretation that the relief was extended to those who abstained from conscientious motives. The Acts applied only to those who were actually in office or in corporations, and in elections to corporate offices where previous conformity was required it was still open to any individual to object to a Dissenting candidate, and such an objection rendered invalid all votes that were given to him.[1] A few scrupulous Nonconformists considered it wrong to avail themselves of the permission of the Legislature to break the law, or to be guilty of what Lord North pronounced to be 'a mental fraud' by sheltering their conscientious scruples under a law which professed only to give relief to the careless, the ignorant, or the absent. Many instances were cited in which Dissenting candidates were excluded from corporations, because previous to the election, notice had been given that they had not fulfilled the requirement of the law by receiving the sacrament in an Anglican Church within the preceding year, and those who obtained office enjoyed only a precarious liberty, depending upon the annual vote of Parliament.[2] But when all these qualifications have been made, the fact remains that through the opera-

[1] See *Parl. Hist.* (New Series) xviii. 689, 726.

[2] The fullest information I have met with about the practical operation of the Test Act is in a collection called *The Test Act Reporter* (3rd ed. 1829).

tion of the Indemnity Acts a great number of the Dissenters were admitted to offices and corporations, and were admitted without exciting any ferment in the community. The first Indemnity Act was passed in 1727, and, with a few exceptions, a similar Act was passed every year till the Test Act was repealed in 1828.

Another branch of the religious policy of the Whigs was intended to meet the scruples of the Quakers. When the temporary Act making their solemn affirmation equivalent, in all civil cases, to an oath, was made perpetual in 1715, an amendment was introduced by the Lords, and accepted by the Commons, extending the Act to Scotland and, for a limited period, to the colonies.[1] An opinion, however, soon grew up among the Quakers that to affirm 'in the presence of Almighty God' was not less sinful than to swear, and a Bill was accordingly introduced by the Government in 1721, providing a new form of affirmation, from which the obnoxious words were omitted.[2] A portion of the London clergy petitioned against the Bill, and the two Archbishops opposed it, but it was carried by a large majority. Another measure was less successful. The Acts providing a cheap method of levying tithes were not compulsory, and it was still in the power of the clergy to carry their tithe cases before the Exchequer or Ecclesiastical Courts, and thus to inflict on the Quakers heavy costs and imprisonment. That this course was actually adopted to a very considerable extent appears from the petitions of the Quakers, who stated that not less than 1,180 of their number had, since the passing of the Relief Acts, been prosecuted for tithes in the Exchequer, Ecclesiastical, or other Courts in England and Wales; that 302 of them had been committed to prison, and that nine had died prisoners. They added that 'these prosecutions, though frequently commenced for trivial sums, from 4*s.* to 5*s.*, and the greater part of them for sums not exceeding 40*s.*, have been attended with such heavy costs and rigorous exactions that above 800*l.* have been taken from ten persons when the original demands upon all of them collectively did not amount to 15*l.*'[3] Walpole, who, in his elections, had been brought in much con-

[1] 1 George I. ii. 6. Gough's *Hist. of the Quakers*, iv. 161.

[2] 8 George I. c. 6.

[3] Bogue and Bennett's *Hist. of Dissenters*, ii. 128. Gough's *Hist. of Quakers*, iv. 279–302.

tact with Quakers, warmly supported their demand that the simplest method of levying tithes should be the only method, and a Bill embodying this principle passed easily through the House of Commons. A great agitation, however, then arose among the clergy. They contended that the security of tithes would be diminished, and that it was necessary to deter those who refused to pay them, by the infliction of heavy fines, and it was suggested with whimsical ingenuity that there might be persons who, believing tithes to be of Divine origin, would think it wrong to enforce their claims before any but an Ecclesiastical Court, and would in consequence be persecuted if they were obliged to resort to the magistrates.[1] The Bishop of London led the opposition; fourteen other bishops voted against the Bill, and the Chancellor having taken the same side, the measure, to the great indignation of Walpole, was rejected in the Lords.

The next class of questions bearing in some degree upon religious liberty were those relating to the naturalisation of foreign Protestants and of Jews. The proposal to naturalise foreign Protestants upon their taking the oaths and receiving the Sacrament in any Protestant church, which had been carried in 1709, and repealed in 1712, was brought forward by Mr. Nugent in 1745, and again in 1751. An alarm which had at this time been spread about an alleged decrease of population through excessive drinking greatly favoured it,[2] and on the latter occasion it was warmly supported by Pelham, who was then at the head of the Government, and it was carried successfully through its earlier stages. It soon, however, appeared that a powerful combination of influences was opposed to it. The City of London, fearing a dangerous rivalry in trade, led the opposition, and although petitions from Liverpool and Bristol, and from some London merchants, were presented in its favour, the balance of mercantile opinion seems to have been against it. The Church dreaded an accession to the forces of Dissent, and the strong popular antipathy to foreigners was speedily aroused. The death of the Prince of Wales led to a slight postponement of the Bill, and the petitions against it were so

[1] *Parl. Hist.* ix. 1165–1219. [2] See Walpole's *George II.* i. 44–45.

numerous and so urgent that the minister thought it advisable silently to drop it.

A more remarkable history is the attempt of the Pelhams in 1753 to legalise the naturalisation of Jews. The Jews, as is well known, had been completely banished from England by a Statute of Edward I., and they did not attempt to return till the Commonwealth, and were not formally authorised to establish themselves in England till after the Restoration.[1] The first synagogue in London was erected in 1662. It is possible that occasional physicians or merchants may have secretly come over before,[2] but their number must have been very few, and it is more than probable that Shakespeare, when he drew his immortal picture of Shylock, had himself never seen a Jew. The hatred, indeed, of that unhappy race in England was peculiarly tenacious and intense. The old calumny that the Jews were accustomed on Good Friday to crucify a Christian boy, which was sedulously circulated on the Continent, and which even now forms the subject of one of the great frescoes around the Cathedral of Toledo, was firmly believed, and the legend of the crucifixion of young Hew of Lincoln sank deeply into the popular imagination. The story was told by Matthew Paris; it was embodied in an early ballad; it was revived, many years after the expulsion of the Jews, by Chaucer, who made the Jewish murder of a Christian child the subject of one of his most graphic tales;[3] and in the same spirit Marlowe, towards the close of the sixteenth century, painted his 'Jew of Malta' in the darkest colours. There does not appear, however, to have been any legal obstacle to the sovereign and Parliament naturalising a Jew till a law, enacted under James I., and directed against the Catholics, made the sacramental test an essential preliminary to naturalisation. Two subsequent enactments exempted from this necessity all foreigners who were engaged in the hemp and flax manufacture, and all Jews and Protestant foreigners who had lived for seven continuous years in the American plan-

[1] Blunt's *Hist. of the Jews in England*, p. 72.

[2] The Jews were specially famous for their knowledge of medicine, and a Jewish doctor named Lopez, was one of the physicians of Queen Elizabeth, and was executed for an attempt to poison her. See Hume's *Hist. of England*, ch. xliii. See too Picciotto's *Anglo-Jewish Hist.* p. 24.

[3] *The Prioress's Tale.*

tations.[1] In the reign of James II. the Jews were relieved from the payment of the alien duty, but it is a significant fact that it was reimposed after the Revolution at the petition of the London merchants.[2] In the reign of Anne some of them are said to have privately negotiated with Godolphin for permission to purchase the town of Brentford, and to settle there with full privileges of trade; but the minister, fearing to arouse the spirit of religious intolerance and of commercial jealousy, refused the application.[3] The great development of industrial enterprise which followed the long and prosperous administration of Walpole naturally attracted Jews, who were then as now pre-eminent in commercial matters, and many of them appear at this time to have settled in England; among others a young Venetian Jew, whose son obtained an honourable place in English literature, and whose grandson has been twice Prime Minister of England. The object of the Pelhams was not to naturalise all resident Jews, but simply to enable Parliament to pass special Bills to naturalise those who applied to it, although they had not lived in the colonies or been engaged in the hemp or flax manufacture.

As the principle of naturalisation had been fully conceded by these two Acts, which had been passed without any difficulty, and had continued in operation without exciting any murmur, as the Bill could only apply to a few rich men who were prepared to undertake the expensive process of a parliamentary application, as Jews might be naturalised in any other country in Europe except Spain and Portugal,[4] and as they were among the most harmless, industrious, and useful members of the community, it might have been imagined that a Bill of this nature could scarcely offend the most sensitive ecclesiastical conscience. When it was brought forward, however, a general election was not far distant, the opponents of the ministry raised the cry that the Bill was an unchristian one, and England was thrown

[1] *Parl. Hist.* xiv. 1373-1374.

[2] Blunt's *Hist. of the Jews in England*, p. 72.

[3] Spence's *Anecdotes.*

[4] This at least was stated in the debate. *Parl. Hist.* xiv. 1400. One of the pamphleteers against the measure stated that Sweden, Russia, the Republic of Genoa, and a score of the German States also refused to receive Jews. *An Answer to a Pamphlet entitled 'Considerations for Permitting Persons Professing the Jewish Religion to be Naturalised,'* p. 40.

into paroxysms of excitement scarcely less intense than those which followed the impeachment of Sacheverell. There is no page in the history of the eighteenth century that shows more decisively how low was the intellectual and political condition of English public opinion. According to its opponents, the Jewish Naturalisation Bill sold the birthright of Englishmen for nothing, it was a distinct abandonment of Christianity, it would draw down upon England all the curses which Providence had attached to the Jews. The commercial classes complained that it would fill England with usurers. The landed classes feared that ultimately the greater part of the land of England would pass into the hands of the Jews, who would avail themselves of their power to destroy the Church. One Member of Parliament urged that to give the Jews a resting-place in England would invalidate prophecy and destroy one of the principal reasons for believing in the Christian religion. Another reminded the ministers that after 430 years the Jews in Egypt had mustered 600,000 armed men, and that, according to the 'Book of Esther,' they had once, when they got the upper hand in the land where they were living, 'put to death in two days 76,000 of those whom they were pleased to call their enemies, without either judge or jury.' The time might come, it was suggested, when, through another Esther, they might govern the destinies of England, or when they might even take their seats as Members of Parliament. It was stated that when Cromwell first extended his protection to the race some Asiatic Jews imagined him to be the promised Messiah, and even sent over deputies to make private inquiries in Huntingdonshire, in order, if possible, to establish his Jewish extraction, and it was argued that through a similar persuasion the Jews would probably support another Cromwell in his attacks upon the Constitution. The Mayor and Corporation of London petitioned against the Bill. The clergy all over England denounced it. The old story of the crucifixion of Christian children by Jews was revived, and the bishops who had voted for the Bill were libelled, and insulted in the streets. The measure had first been introduced into the House of Lords, and was carried through without difficulty, and with the acquiescence of most of the bishops. It passed, after a fierce opposition, through the Commons, and

received the royal assent; but as the tide of popular indignation rose higher and higher, the ministers in the next year brought forward and carried its repeal. Had they not done so, it is probable that the election, which was then imminent, would have proved disastrous to their power, and they argued plausibly, and perhaps justly, that in the excited state of popular feeling the Jews could not, if the Act continued in force, live safely in England. An attempt was made by the Church party to carry their victory further and repeal the Act which naturalised dissenters from the Anglican creed who had resided for seven years in the Plantations, in so far as it related to the Jews, but the Government resisted, and succeeded in defeating the attempt.[1]

The agitation which was excited by this very moderate measure of the Pelham ministry goes far to justify the Whig party for not having done more in the cause of religious liberty during the long period of their ascendancy. The feelings of the country would not allow it, and in spite of the incontestable decline of the theological spirit, there was still no other question on which public opinion was so sensitive. Nor was this intolerance confined to England, or to the Church of England, or to the High Church section of the clergy. In Scotland the hatred of religious liberty ran still higher. The Scotch preachers denounced it with untiring vehemence, and the General Assembly, in 1702, presented a solemn address to the Lord High Commissioner urging that no motion 'of any legal toleration of those of the prelatical principle might be entertained by the Parliament,' and declaring that such a toleration would be 'to establish iniquity by law.'[2] In 1697 a deputation of English Dissenting ministers waited upon the King to urge him to interdict the printing of any work advocating Socinian opinions.[3] In 1702 a Dissenter named Emlyn, being accused by some Irish Nonconformists, but with the encouragement of the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, was sentenced to pay a fine of 1,000*l.* and to lie in gaol till it was paid, because he had written against the

[1] See the very curious discussions on this Bill. *Parl. Hist.* xiv. 1366–1430; xv. 92–163; Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 245–253, 290–298.

[2] Lathbury's *Hist. of the Nonjurors*, pp. 441–451.

[3] Skeat's *Hist. of Free Churches*, p. 184.

Trinity.[1] Among the clergy of the Church of England one of the most active in fanning the absurd agitation on the Jewish question was Romaine, who was one of the earliest and most prominent leaders of the Evangelical party.[2]

One very important step, however, was taken without provoking any agitation or opposition. The belief in witchcraft, which has furnished one of the most singular and tragical pages in the history of superstition, had almost disappeared in England among the educated classes at the time of the Revolution, though it was still active in Scotland and the colonies. The law, however, condemning witches to death still remained on the Statute Book, and it was not altogether a dead letter. Three witches had been hung at Exeter in 1682,[3] and even after the Revolution there had been occasional trials. Addison—whose judgment was afterwards echoed by Blackstone—speaks on the subject with a curious hesitation. 'I believe in general,' he says, 'that there is and has been such a thing as witchcraft, but at the same time can give no credit to any particular instance of it.'[4] The great clerical agitation which followed the Sacheverell impeachment is said to have produced a temporary recrudescence of the superstition,[5] and it was observed about this time that there was scarcely a village in England which did not contain a reputed witch.[6] At the same time those who were in authority steadily discouraged the superstition. A woman named Jane Wenham having been found guilty of the offence in 1712 received a free pardon at the instance of the judge, in spite of the urgent protest of some of the clergy of the county,[7]

[1] As Hoadly very sarcastically said, 'The nonconformists accused him, the conformists condemned him, the secular power was called in, and the cause ended in an imprisonment and a very great fine, two methods of conviction about which the Gospel is silent.'—See Hunt's *Religious Thought in England*, ii. p. 326.

[2] Ryle's *Christian Leaders of the Last Century*. Cadogan's *Life of Romaine*.

[3] Hutchinson's *Historical Essay on Witchcraft*, p. 68. Hutchinson says that these were the last judicially executed in England, but Dr. Parr speaks of two having suffered at Northampton in 1705, and five others at the same place in 1722.—Parr's *Works*, iv. 182 (1828).

[4] Spectator, No. 117. See too the remarks of Blackstone.—*Commentaries*, book iv. c. 4.

[5] 'Since the reign of Dr. Sacheverell, when the clamours against freethinking began to be loudest, the devil has again resumed his empire and appears in the shape of cats, and enters into confederacy with old women; and several have been tryed, and many are accused through all parts of the kingdom for being witches.'—Collin's *Discourse on Freethinking*, p. 30.

[6] Spectator, No. 117.

[7] Hutchinson, 163–171.

and in the same year the death of a suspected witch who had been thrown into the water in order to ascertain whether she would sink or swim, and who had perished during the trial, was pronounced by Chief Justice Parker to be murder.[1] It is one of the great glories of the early Hanoverian period that it witnessed the abrogation of the sanguinary enactment by which so many innocent victims had perished. Chief Justice Holt did good service to humanity in exposing the imposture which lay at the root of some cases he was obliged to try,[2] and in 1736 the law making witchcraft punishable by death was repealed. The superstition long smouldered among the poorer classes; there were several instances of the murder of suspected witches; and Methodism did something to strengthen the belief, but as it had no longer the sanction of the law, and as diseased imaginations were no longer excited by the executions, it sank speedily into insignificance. It is a curious fact that the Irish law against witchcraft, though long wholly obsolete, remained on the Statute Book till 1818.

Another measure of a very different kind, but also in some degree dependent upon the theological temperature, belonging to the period I am considering, was the reform of the calendar. The New Style, as is well known, had been first brought into use by Pope Gregory XIII., in 1582, and had gradually been adopted by all the Continental nations, except Russia and Sweden, but England, partly from natural conservatism, and partly from antipathy to the Pope, still resisted, and had at last got eleven days wrong. The change was carried on the motion of Lord Chesterfield, and with the assistance of the eminent mathematicians, Lord Macclesfield and Mr. Bradley, under the Pelham Ministry in 1751. The year was henceforth to begin on January 1 instead of on March 25; and in order to rectify the errors of the old calendar it was ordered that the day following September 2, 1752, should be denominated the 14th. The old Duke of Newcastle, whose timid and time-serving nature dreaded beyond all things an explosion of popular feeling, entreated Chesterfield not to 'stir matters

[1] Ibid. pp. 175, 176. Hutchinson, who wrote in 1718, says, 'Our country people are still as fond of this custom of swimming as they are of baiting a bear or a bull.'

[2] Campbell's *Chief Justices*—Life of Holt.

that had long been quiet,' or to meddle with 'new-fangled things,' and although the reform was ultimately carried without difficulty, these apprehensions were not wholly groundless. A widespread irritation was for a time aroused. Much was said about the profanity of altering saint-days and immovable feasts. At the next election one of the most popular cries against Lord Macclesfield's son was, 'Give us back our eleven days!' When, many years later, Mr. Bradley died of a lingering disease, his sufferings were supposed by the populace to be a judgment due to the part he had taken in the transaction; and the feelings of many were probably expressed in a saying that was quoted during the debate on the naturalisation of the Jews, 'It is no wonder he should be for naturalising the devil who was one of those that banished old Christmas.'[1]

There were, however, still two classes of laws upon the Statute Book which were grossly persecuting, and which, during the early Hanoverian period, were entirely unmitigated. I mean, of course, those against the Catholics and the disbelievers in the Trinity. The measures against the former class may no doubt derive a very considerable palliation from the atrocious persecutions of which Catholicism had been guilty in almost every country in which she triumphed, from the incessant plots against the life and power of Elizabeth, and from the intimate connection, both before and after the Revolution, between the Catholicism of the Stuarts and their political conduct and prospects. Catholicism, indeed, never can be looked upon merely as a religion. It is a great and highly organised kingdom, recognising no geographical frontiers, governed by a foreign sovereign, pervading temporal politics with its manifold influence, and attracting to itself much of the enthusiasm which would otherwise flow in national channels. The intimate correspondence between its priests in many lands, the disciplined unity of their political action, the almost absolute authority they exercise over large classes, and their usually almost complete detachment from purely national and patriotic interests

[1] *Parl. Hist.* xv. 136. So, too, a ballad against the Jew Bill begins—

> In seventeen hundred and fifty three
> The style it was changed to Popery.
> —*Political Ballads*, ii. 311.

See, on this subject, Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, iii. 340; Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, pp. 320–323; Coxe's *Pelham*, ii. 178–179; and Hogarth's picture of an Election.

have often in critical times proved a most serious political danger, and they have sometimes pursued a temporal policy eminently aggressive, sanguinary, unscrupulous, and ambitious. Nor should it be forgotten that, in the closing years of the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century, the spirit of Romish persecution, though gradually subsiding, was still far from extinct. Thus we find Stanhope writing from Majorca in 1691: 'Tuesday last there were burnt here twenty-seven Jews and heretics, and to-morrow I shall see executed above twenty more, and Tuesday next, if I stay here so long, is to be another *fiesta*, for so they entitle a day dedicated to so execrable an act.'[1] In 1706 Wilcox, who was afterwards Bishop of Rochester, but who was at this time minister of the English factory at Lisbon, wrote a letter to Burnet describing an *auto-da-fé* in that city, in which four persons were burnt in the presence of the King, and of these one woman remained alive for half-an-hour, and one man for more than an hour in the flames, vainly imploring their executioners to heap fresh fagots on the fire in order to terminate their agony.[2] Every considerable town in England, Holland, and Protestant Germany, contained a colony of Frenchmen, who, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, had been driven from their homes by a persecution of extreme ferocity; a long course of the most atrocious cruelties had kindled the flame of rebellion in the Cevennes, and at the time of the Peace of Utrecht 188 French Protestants were released by English intercession from the galleys.[3] In 1717, an assembly of seventy-four Protestants being surprised at Andure, the men were sent to the galleys and the women to prison.[4] In 1724, in the corrupt and generally sceptical period of the Regency, a new law was made against the Protestants of France which aggravated even the atrocious enactments of Lewis XIV. By one clause all who assembled for the exercise of the Protestant worship, even in their own homes, became liable to lifelong servitude in the galleys, and to the confiscation of all their goods. Another condemned to death any Protestant

[1] Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 107.

[2] See this letter in full in Chandler's *Hist. of Persecution* (1736), p. 287. See too some curious particulars on persecutions in Portugal in Geddes' tracts, i. 385–443.

[3] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 121. See, too, Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 484.

[4] Taine's *Ancien Régime*, p. 80.

minister exercising any religious function whatever, and to the galleys any witness who failed to denounce him. A third enjoined all physicians to inform the priest of the condition of every dying patient, in order that, whether he desired it or not, a Catholic priest should be present at his deathbed. A fourth, with a rare refinement of ingenious malice, rendered any Protestant who, by his religious exhortations, strengthened a dying relative in his faith, liable to the galleys and to the confiscation of his goods.[1] A Protestant pastor was hung at Montpellier in 1728; another would have suffered the same fate in 1732 had he not succeeded in escaping from his prison;[2] and 277 Protestants in Dauphiny were condemned to the galleys in 1745 and 1746.[3] As late as the Peace of Paris, a Protestant minister at Nismes wrote to the Duke of Bedford imploring the intercession of the English Government in favour of thirty-three men, who were in the galleys of Toulon, and of sixteen women, who were imprisoned in Languedoc, for no other offence than that of having attended Protestant assemblies. Many of them, he added, had remained in captivity for more than thirty years.[4]

Similar complaints came from Hungary, where the interference of the Emperor with the religious liberty of the Protestants contributed largely to the insurrection of Rákóczy; from Silesia, where the same interference prepared the way for the ultimate severance of the province from the Austrian rule; from Poland, where the persecution fomented in 1724 by the Jesuits at Thorn aroused the indignation of all Protestant Europe, and where the complete exclusion of religious dissidents from political power in 1733 was sowing dissensions that were the sure precursors of the approaching ruin. In the course of 1732 and the two following years about 17,000 German Protestants were compelled by the persecution of the Archbishop of Salzburg to abandon their homes, and to seek a refuge in Prussia or in Georgia. Ten persons were burnt for their religious opinions in Spain between 1746 and 1759. Two persons were executed, and many others condemned to less severe penalties by the Inquisition in Portugal in 1756.[5]

[1] Sismondi's *Hist. des Français*, xix. 241–244.
[2] Ibid. p. 302.
[3] Taine's *Ancien Régime*, p. 80.
[4] *Bedford Correspondence*, iii. 155.
[5] See Buckle's *Hist.* ii. 109.

These things will not be forgotten by a candid judge in estimating the policy of the English Government towards Catholics. On the other hand, he will remember that the English Catholics were so few and so inconsiderable that it was absurd to regard them as a serious danger to the State; that they had in general shown themselves under the most trying circumstances eminently moderate and loyal, and that although the Catholic priests, whenever they were in the ascendant, were then, as ever, a persecuting body, Catholicism, as a whole, had ceased, since the Peace of Westphalia, to divide the interests of Europe. In Switzerland, it is true, a war that was essentially religious broke out between the Protestant and Catholic cantons as late as 1712, but in general theology had very little influence upon the politics of Christendom. They turned mainly on the rivalry between the Catholic Emperor and the Catholic King of France. The Popes, who, as spiritual heads of Christendom, had employed all their temporal and spiritual weapons against Elizabeth, had never acted in this manner against her successors. During the struggle of the Revolution a great part of Catholic Europe was on the side of William, and, as we have seen, the Pope himself was in his favour. It may be added, too, that the persecution of religious opinion and the suppression of any form of religious worship must always appear peculiarly culpable in Protestants, whose whole theory of religion is based upon the assertion of the right of private judgment, and also that religious liberty, though still rare and struggling in Europe, was by no means unknown. In France, it is true, it had been destroyed by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, but in Germany it existed to a considerable extent since the Peace of Westphalia, which placed the Catholic and Protestant States in a position of perfect equality, terminated the long contest for the possession of the ecclesiastical benefices, and in many cases restrained, though it by no means generally annulled, the power of the sovereign to coerce his dissident subjects.[1] In Prussia, which

Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, bk. ix. ch. 3, and the curious collection of lists of Portuguese *autos-da-fé* in the eighteenth century, in the British Museum. The disturbances at Thorn were made the subject of a speci article in the treaty of Hanover between England and Prussia in 1725.

[1] The rather complicated provisions of the treaty on this subject are explained at length by Coxe's *House of Austria*, i. 955-957.

was rapidly becoming the most important Protestant Power of Germany, the Elector, Frederick William, who died in 1688, even contributed money for the building of Catholic churches, and under his successor the Catholics had almost every privilege they could have possessed under a ruler of their own creed.[1] In Holland a system of absolute religious freedom was established, and its complete success was generally recognised. So perfectly were the different religions in that country blended into a common nationality that it was asserted, though probably with some exaggeration, that there were no less than 4,000 Catholics in the army with which William came over to defend the Protestantism of England.[2] Even in Ireland, though the Catholic majority were subject to gross oppression as a conquered race, they were in practice allowed during the latter Stuart reigns full liberty of worship, and no religious disqualification excluded them from the municipalities, from the elective franchise, from the magistracy, or from the Parliament.

In England public opinion made such a policy impossible. The laws of Elizabeth against the Catholics remained, though they were but partially enforced, and these laws, among many other provisions, compelled every Catholic to attend the Anglican service, suppressed absolutely, and under crushing penalties, the celebration of the mass, proscribed the whole Catholic priesthood, and made it high treason for any English priest from beyond the sea to come to England, for any Catholic graduate to refuse for the third time the oath of supremacy, for any Protestant to become a Catholic, or for any Catholic to convert a Protestant. Had such laws been rigorously enforced they must have led to a general Catholic emigration or have dyed every scaffold with Popish blood; and, as it was, many Catholics perished in England, to whom it is the merest sophistry to deny the title of martyrs for their faith. The conspiracy of Guy Faux to blow up the Parliament, the fable of the Popish plot which led to the effusion of torrents of innocent blood, and, perhaps, still more, the baseless calumny which attributed the Fire of London to the Papists, sustained the anti-Catholic fanaticism. This last calamity had, in the words of Clarendon,

[1] Ranke's *Hist. of Prussia* (Eng. trans.), ii. 57.

[2] Reresby's *Memoirs* (Ed. 1875), p. 437.

'kindled another fire in the breasts of men almost as dangerous as that within their houses.' Panic-stricken by the rapid progress of the flames, half-maddened by terror and by despair, the people at once attributed it to deliberate incendiarism. The Dutch and French were the first objects of their suspicion, but soon after, the Papists were included, and were dragged in multitudes to prison. A Portuguese who, according to the custom of his country, picked up a piece of bread that was lying on the ground, and laid it on the ledge projecting from the nearest house, was seized on the charge of throwing in fire-balls. Among the crowd of terrified prisoners was a poor Frenchman, whose brain appears to have been turned by the terror and excitement of the scene, and who confessed himself the author of the fire. He appears to have been simply a monomaniac, and the judges openly declared their utter disbelief in his disjointed and unsupported story; but in the temper in which men then were he was condemned, and the King did not dare to arrest his execution. Nor was the panic suffered to pass away. Although a Parliamentary committee, after the strictest enquiry, could find nothing whatever implicating the Catholics (who, indeed, could have gained nothing by the crime), it was determined, in the most solemn and authoritative manner, to brand them as its perpetrators. The Monument, erected in memorial of the catastrophe in one of the most crowded thoroughfares of London, bore two Latin inscriptions, commemorating the rebuilding of the city, and the mayors by whose care the Monument was erected. The third inscription was in English, that all might read it, and it was to the effect that 'This pillar was set up in perpetual remembrance of the most dreadful burning of this ancient city, begun and carried on by the treachery and malice of the Popish faction in the beginning of September, in the year of our Lord 1666, in order to the carrying on their horrid plot for extirpating the Protestant religion and old English liberty, and introducing Popery and slavery.' In the reign of James II. this scandalous inscription was taken away, but it was restored at the Revolution, and it was not finally removed till 1831. Another and very similar inscription was placed in Pudding Lane, on the spot where the fire began, and

remained there till the middle of the last century, when it was removed on account of the crowds who gathered to read it.[1]

It would be difficult to conceive a more effectual device for arousing the passions of the people. In the struggle of the Revolution a direct question between Protestantism and Catholicism was at issue, and it is not surprising that considerable attention should have been paid to the legislation on the subject. During the whole period of the Stuarts the sovereigns had been favourable, and the Parliaments bitterly hostile, to the Catholics. The former were actuated partly by the belief that while Puritanism is naturally hostile to the royal prerogative, Catholicism is naturally congenial to it, and partly also by religious sympathy, by Catholic relationships, and by Continental alliances. James I. for a time suspended the laws against recusants, and opened negotiations with the Pope; and, but for the violent spirit then dominating in the Vatican, and the very natural indignation aroused by the Gunpowder Plot, his reign would probably have witnessed considerable mitigations of the penal code. Charles I., when Prince of Wales, had made a secret engagement with France, on the occasion of his French marriage, to obtain toleration for the Catholics, and the non-enforcement of the laws against them was almost the first question that brought him into collision with his Parliament. The attempt of Charles II. to exercise a dispensing power in favour of the Catholics, for the first time aroused the Parliament of the Restoration into opposition; while the ill-timed, ill-directed, and exaggerated efforts of James to remove the disabilities of his co-religionists were the main cause of his downfall. From William also the Catholics had something to hope. He came to England, it is true, as the special representative of Protestantism, but he came from a country where religious liberty was established, and he was himself entirely free from the stain of intolerance. In the negotiations that preceded his expedition he had given the Emperor a distinct assurance that he would do his utmost to procure for the English

[1] Jesse's *London*, ii. 227, 311. Seymour's *Survey of London*, bk. ii. ch. 10. Continuation of the *Life of Clarendon*. Pope's couplet on the Monument is well known:—

Where London's column, pointing to the skies,
Like a tall bully, lifts its head, and lies.

Catholics a repeal of the penal laws[1]; and the declaration which he issued upon his arrival in England promised freedom of conscience to all who would live peaceably. There can be no doubt that these sentiments expressed his real desire, and friend and foe have admitted that in the early part of his reign his influence was employed to prevent the enforcement of persecuting laws against Catholics.[2] It was, however, probably not in his power to induce the Parliament to repeal the penal laws, or to prevent it from passing new laws, and he at least never chose to risk the unpopularity of refusing his assent to the persecuting laws which were enacted during his reign. These laws were maintained and were extended during the first two reigns of the Hanoverian period, and they form, perhaps, the darkest blot upon the history of the Revolution. Thus, to omit minor details, an Act was passed in 1699, by which any Catholic priest convicted of celebrating mass, or discharging any sacerdotal function, in England (except in the house of an ambassador) was made liable to perpetual imprisonment; and, in order that this law might not become a dead letter, a reward of 100*l.* was offered for conviction. Perpetual imprisonment was likewise the punishment to which any Papist became liable who was found guilty of keeping a school, or otherwise undertaking the education of the young. No parent might send a child abroad to be educated in the Catholic faith, under penalty of a fine of 100*l.*, which was bestowed upon the informer. All persons who did not, within six months of attaining the age of eighteen, take the Oath, not only of Allegiance, but also of Supremacy, and subscribe the declaration against transubstantiation, became incapable of either inheriting or purchasing land, and the property they would otherwise have inherited passed to the next Protestant heir. By a law which was enacted in the first year of George I. all persons in any civil or military office, all members of colleges, teachers, preachers, and lawyers of every grade were compelled to take the Oath of Supremacy, which was distinctly anti-Catholic, as well as the Oath of Allegiance and the declaration against the Stuarts. By the same law any two

[1] See Ranke's *Hist. of England*, iv. 437.

[2] See the remarks of Burnet in his *Hist. of his Own Times*, ii. 12, and the remarkable note of Lord Dartmouth, ii. 229. Butler's *Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics*, ii. pp. 52–53.

justices of the peace might at any time tender to any Catholic the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy if they regarded him as disaffected. They might do this without any previous complaint or any evidence of his disaffection, and if he refused to take them he was liable to all the penalties of recusancy, which reduced him to a condition of absolute servitude. A Popish recusant was debarred from appearing at court, or even coming within ten miles of London, from holding any office or employment, from keeping arms in his house, from travelling more than five miles from home, unless by licence, under pain of forfeiting all his goods, and from bringing any action at law, or suit in equity. A married woman recusant forfeited two-thirds of her jointure or dower, was disabled from being executor or administratrix to her husband, or obtaining any part of his goods, and was liable to imprisonment unless her husband redeemed her by a ruinous fine. All Popish recusants within three months of conviction, might be called upon by four justices of the peace to renounce their errors or to abandon the kingdom; and if they did not depart, or if they returned without the King's licence, they were liable to the penalty of death. By this Act the position of the Catholics became one of perpetual insecurity. It furnished a ready handle to private malevolence, and often restrained the Catholics from exercising even their legal rights. Catholics who succeeded in keeping their land were compelled to register their estates, and all future conveyances and wills relating to them. They were subjected by an annual law to a double land-tax, and in 1722 a special tax was levied upon their property.[1]

A legislation animated by the same spirit extended to other portions of the empire. In the English colonies in North America there existed, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, an amount of religious liberty considerably greater than had yet been established in Europe. The Virginian Episcopalians, it is true, proscribed the Puritans and Catholics, and the New England Puritans proscribed and persecuted the Episcopalians and the Quakers; but the constitutions of the Quaker

[1] Blackstone, bk. iv. ch. 4. Butler's *Hist. Memoirs of the English Catholics*, ch. xxxiv. The chief laws were, 11 and 12 Wm. III. c. 4; 1 Geo. I. Stat. 2. c. 13; 1 Geo. I. Stat. 2. c. 55; 3 Geo. I. c. 18.

States, and the constitution of Rhode Island, which was founded by Roger Williams in 1662, laid down, in the most emphatic and unqualified terms, the doctrine of complete religious liberty. It is, however, a remarkable fact that Maryland, which was founded by the Catholic Lord Baltimore, as early as 1632, and which contained a large proportion of Catholics among its earliest colonists, preceded them in this path. It accorded perfect freedom to all Protestant sects, welcomed alike the persecuted Puritans of Virginia and the persecuted Episcopalians of Massachusetts, granted them every privilege which was possessed by the Catholics, and exhibited, for the first time since the Reformation, the spectacle of a Government acting with perfect toleration and a steady and unflinching impartiality towards all sects of Trinitarian Christians. Something, no doubt, has been said with truth to qualify its merit. The measure was a defensive one. The toleration was only extended to the believers in the Trinity. The terms of the charter would have made the suppression of the Anglican worship illegal; but still the fact remains, that, so far as Trinitarian Christians were concerned, the legislators of Maryland, who were in a great measure Catholic, undertook to try the experiment, not only of complete religious toleration, but also of complete religious equality; and that, at a time and in a country where they were almost entirely uncontrolled, they fulfilled their promise with perfect fidelity. In 1649, when the Legislature contained both Protestants and Catholics, a law was made, solemnly enacting that 'no person within this province, professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be in any way troubled, molested, or discountenanced for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof;' and by the Catholics, at least, the promise of this law was never broken. The shameful sequel is soon told. The Protestants speedily multiplied in the province. They outnumbered the Catholics, and they enslaved them. The aristocratic constitution of the State, which produced a strong democratic opposition to Lord Baltimore, assisted them, and the Revolution in England gave the signal for the complete destruction of religious liberty in Maryland. The Catholics were excluded from all prominent offices in the State which a Catholic had founded. Anglicanism was made

an Established Church, and in 1704 the mass was forbidden, the priesthood were proscribed, and no Catholic was any longer permitted to educate the young. Laws of a very similar character were enacted in New York, and in other American States; and even Rhode Island, which had been still more tolerant than Maryland—for it extended its protection to disbelievers in the Trinity—appears to have followed the example.[1]

In Ireland also the Revolution was speedily followed by the penal code. The Catholic population had naturally remained faithful to their sovereign, whose too zealous Catholicism was in the eyes of the English his greatest fault; and the triumph of William, which brought many benefits to England, consigned Ireland to the most hopeless and the most degrading servitude. For the third time an immense proportion of the soil was torn from its native owners, and bestowed upon foreigners and enemies, and nearly all the talent, the energy, the ambition of the nation was driven to the Continent. One hope, however, remained. At a time when the war was going decidedly against the Catholics, but was still by no means terminated, when Limerick was still far from captured, when the approach of winter, the prospect of pestilence arising from the heavy floods, the news of succours on the way from France, and the dangers of another insurrection at home made the situation of the besiegers very grave, the Irish generals agreed to surrender the city, and thus terminate the war, if by doing so they could secure for their people religious liberty. The consideration they offered was a very valuable one, for the prolongation of the war till another spring would have been full of danger to the unsettled government of William, and the stipulations of the Irish in favour of religious liberty were given the very first place in the treaty that was signed. The period since the Reformation in which the Irish Catholics were most unmolested in their worship was the reign of Charles II.; and the first article of the Treaty of Limerick stipulated that 'the Roman Catholics of this kingdom shall enjoy such privileges in the exercise of their religion as are consistent with the laws of Ireland, or as they

[1] Bancroft's *Hist. of the United States*, ch. vii., xix. Recent investigations show that the original tolerance of Maryland was less exclusively the work of Catholics than has been asserted, and that the majority in the Legislature of 1649 which passed the Toleration Act was Protestant.

did enjoy in the reign of Charles II.; and their Majesties, as soon as their affairs will permit them to summon a Parliament in this kingdom, will endeavour to procure the said Roman Catholics such further security as may preserve them from any disturbance upon the account of their said religion.' The ninth article determined that 'the oath to be administered to such Roman Catholics as submit to their Majesties' government shall be the oath of allegiance, and no other.' These articles were signed by the Lords Justices of Ireland, and ratified by their Majesties under the Great Seal of England.

Such a treaty was very reasonably regarded as a solemn charter guaranteeing the Irish Catholics against any further penalties or molestation on account of their religion. It is true that the laws of Elizabeth against Catholicism remained unrepealed, but they had become almost wholly obsolete, and as they were not enforced during the reign of Charles II., it was assumed that they could not be enforced after the Treaty of Limerick. It is true also that the sanction of Parliament was required for the legal validity of the treaty, but that sanction could not, without a grave breach of faith, be withheld from an engagement so solemnly entered into by the Government, at a time when Parliament was not sitting, and in order to obtain a great military advantage. The imposition upon the Irish Catholics, without any fresh provocation, of a mass of new and penal legislation intended to restrict or extinguish their worship, to banish their prelates, and to afflict them with every kind of disqualification, disability, and deprivation on account of their religion, was a direct violation of the plain meaning of the treaty. Those who signed it undertook that the Catholics should not be in a worse position, in respect to the exercise of their religion, than they had been in during the reign of Charles II., and they also undertook that the influence of the Government should be promptly exerted to obtain such an amelioration of their condition as would secure them from the possibility of disturbance. Construed in its plain and natural sense, interpreted as every treaty should be by men of honour, the Treaty of Limerick amounted to no less than this.[1] The public faith was pledged to its observance,

[1] I may here quote the opinion of Burke. Having quoted the first and ninth articles, which I have noticed above, he proceeds: 'Compare this

and the well-known sentiments of William appeared an additional guarantee. William was, indeed, a cold and somewhat selfish man, and the admirable courage and tenacity which he invariably displayed when his own designs and ambition were in question were seldom or never manifested in any disinterested cause, but he was at least eminently tolerant and enlightened, and he had actually before the battle of Aghrim offered the Irish Catholics the free exercise of their religion, half the churches in the kingdom, and the moiety of their ancient possessions.[1] Such an offer is alone sufficient to stamp him as a great statesman, and should have saved his memory from many eulogies which are in truth the worst of calumnies. It must be observed, however, that William, who repeatedly refused his assent to English Acts which he regarded as inimical to his authority, never offered any serious or determined opposition to the anti-Catholic laws which began in his reign. It must be observed also that the penal code, which began under William, which derived its worst features under Anne, and which was largely extended under George I. and George II., was entirely unprovoked by any active disloyalty on the part of the Catholics. To describe the Irish Catholics as having manifested an incurably rebellious and ungrateful disposition because, in the contest of the Revolution, they took the part of the legitimate and hereditary sovereign, to whom all classes had sworn allegiance, and whose title when they took up arms had not been disputed by any act of the Irish Parliament, is a calumny so grotesque and so transparent that it could only have been resorted to by those advocates of persecution who would stoop to any quibble in their cause.[2] And, at

latter article with the penal laws as they are stated in the second chapter, and judge whether they seem to be the public acts of the same powers, and observe whether other oaths are tendered to them, and under what penalties. Compare the former with the same laws from the beginning to the end, and judge whether the Roman Catholics have been preserved agreeably to the sense of the article "from any disturbance on account of their religion," or rather whether on that account there is a single right of nature or benefit of society which has not been either totally taken away or considerably impaired.'—*Tracts on the Popery Laws.*

[1] See a letter of Sir Charles Wogan (nephew of Tyrconnel, to whom the proposition was made) to Swift. 'Swift's *Works* (Scott's ed.), xviii., p. 13.

[2] 'The peculiar situation of that country' [Ireland], says Macpherson, 'seems to have been overlooked in the contest. The desertion upon which the deprivation of James had been founded in England had not existed in Ireland. The Lord-Lieutenancy had

all events, after the Treaty of Limerick had been signed, during the long agony of the penal laws no rebellion took place. About 14,000 Irish soldiers had at once passed into the French service, and a steady stream of emigration soon carried off all the Catholic energy from the country. Deprived of their natural leaders, sunk for the most part in the most brutal ignorance and in the most abject poverty, the Irish Catholics at home remained perfectly passive, while both England and Scotland were convulsed by Jacobitism. It is a memorable fact that the ferocious law of 1703, which first reduced the Irish Catholics to a condition of hopeless servitude, does not allege as the reason for its provisions any political crime. It was called 'An Act to prevent the further growth of Popery.' It was justified in its preamble on the ground that the Papists still continued in their gross and dangerous errors, that some Protestants had been perverted to Popery, and that some Papists had refused to make provision for their Protestant children. A considerable military force was, indeed, kept in Ireland, but this was chiefly because the ministers desired to keep under arms a more numerous standing army than Parliament would tolerate in England, and also to throw upon the Irish revenue a great part of the burden; and whenever serious danger arose, a large proportion was at once withdrawn. The evidence we possess on this subject is curiously complete. In the great rebellion of 1715 not a single overt act of treason was proved against the Catholics in Ireland, and at a time when civil war was raging both in England and Scotland the country remained so profoundly tranquil that the Government sent over several regiments to Scotland to subdue the Jacobites.[1] In 1719, when the alarm of an invasion of England was very great, the Duke of Bolton, who was then Lord Lieutenant, wrote to the Government that if they did not fear a foreign invasion, of Ireland they might safely withdraw the greater part of the army for other services; and he only urged that the nation, on account of its extreme poverty, might be relieved from the necessity of paying the troops during their

retained its allegiance. The Government was uniformly continued under the name of the Prince from whom the servants of the Crown had derived their commissions. James himself had for more than seventeen months exercised the royal function in Ireland. He was certainly *de facto*, if not *de jure*, king.'—*Hist. of Great Britain.*

[1] *Mémoires de Berwick*, ii. 159.

absence. A few weeks later a leading official, writing from Dublin Castle, states that seven Irish regiments were at this time out of the kingdom, that they were still paid from the Irish revenue, and that four more were about to embark.[1] The next great Jacobite alarm was in 1722, and in the very beginning of the danger six regiments were sent from Ireland to England.[2] The Lord Lieutenant vainly asked that they might be paid, while in England, from the English revenue, and his request being refused he begged that they might return as soon as possible, not on account of any danger in Ireland, but because it was 'reasonable that the advantages of entertaining those regiments should accrue to that kingdom from which they received their pay.'[3] In 1725, Swift, who had no sympathy with the Catholics, declared that in Ireland the Pretender's party was at an end, and that 'the Papists in general, of any substance or estates, and their priests almost universally, are what we call Whigs in the sense which by that word is generally understood.'[4] In the great rebellion of 1745, when Scotland was for a time chiefly in the hands of the Pretender, when the Highland army had marched into the heart of England, and when the Protestant succession was very seriously endangered, there was not a ripple of agitation in Ireland; and soon after the struggle was over, Archbishop Stone, the Protestant Primate, delivered in the House of Lords the most emphatic testimony to the loyalty of the Catholics. He declared 'that in the year 1747, after that rebellion was entirely suppressed, happening to be in England, he had an opportunity of perusing all the papers of the rebels and their correspondents, which were seized in the custody of Murray, the Pretender's secretary, and that after having spent much time and taken great pains in examining

[1] See the letters of the Duke of Bolton of July 8 and July 25, and that of Mr. Webster, of August 6, 1719, MSS. English Record-office.

[2] 'We are sending off six regiments to assist you. One would think, considering the number of Papists we have here, that our gentry are for the most part in England, and all our money goes there, that we should rather expect help from you in any distress, than send you forces to protect you. Yet this is the third time we have done so since his Majesty's accession to the throne, and withal preserved the kingdom from any insurrection or rebellion, which is more than can be said for England or Scotland.' Archbishop King to the Archbishop of Canterbury (May, 1722), British Museum MSS. add. 6117.

[3] The Duke of Grafton to the Lords Justices, November 24, 1722. MS. Irish State Paper Office.

[4] Seventh *Drapier's Letter*.

them (not without some share of the then common suspicion that there might be some private understanding and intercourse between them and the Irish Catholics), he could not discover the least trace, hint, or intimation of such intercourse or correspondence in them, or of any of the latter's favouring or abetting, or having been so much as made acquainted with, the designs or proceedings of these rebels.'[1] Everything, indeed, connected with this history corroborates the assertion of Burke, that 'all the penal laws of that unparalleled code of oppression were manifestly the effects of national hatred and scorn towards a conquered people whom the victors delighted to trample upon and were not at all afraid to provoke. They were not the effect of their fears, but of their security. . . . . Whilst that temper prevailed, and it prevailed in all its force to a time within our memory, every measure was pleasing and popular just in proportion as it tended to harass and ruin a set of people who were looked upon as enemies to God and man, and, indeed, as a race of savages who were a disgrace to human nature itself.'[2]

Almost all the great persecutions of history, those of the early Christians, of Catholics and Protestants on the Continent, and, after the Revolution, of Catholics in England, were directed against small minorities. It was the distinguishing characteristic of the Irish penal code that its victims constituted at least three-fourths of the nation, and that it was deliberately intended to demoralise as well as degrade. Its enactments may be divided into different groups. One group was intended to deprive the Catholics of all civil life. By an Act of the English Parliament they were forbidden to sit in that of Ireland.[3] They were afterwards deprived of the elective suffrage, excluded from the corporations, from the magistracy, from the bar, from the bench, from the grand juries, and from the vestries. They could not be sheriffs or solicitors, or even gamekeepers or constables. They were forbidden to possess any arms; and any two justices, or mayor, or sheriff, might at any time issue a search warrant to break into their houses and ransack

[1] Curry's *State of the Irish Catholics*, ii. p. 261. See also, on the profound tranquillity of Ireland, Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of George III.* p. 278.

[2] Burke's *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe.*

[3] 3 William and Mary, ch. 2. English. The other measures of the code were enacted by the Irish parliament and will be found in the Irish Statutes.

them for arms, and if a fowling-piece or a flask of powder was discovered they were liable either to fine or imprisonment or to whipping and the pillory. They were, of course, excluded on the same grounds from the army and navy. They could not even possess a horse of the value of more than 5*l.*, and any Protestant on tendering that sum could appropriate the hunter or the carriage horse of his Catholic neighbour.[1] In his own country the Catholic was only recognised by the law, 'for repression and punishment.' The Lord Chancellor Bowes and the Chief Justice Robinson both distinctly laid down from the bench 'that the law does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Roman Catholic.'[2]

The effect of these measures was to offer the strongest inducements to all men of ability and enterprise to conform outwardly to the dominant creed. If they did not, every path of ambition and almost all means of livelihood were closed to them, and they were at the same time exposed to the most constant, galling, and humiliating tyranny. The events of the Revolution had divided the people into opposing sections bitterly hostile to each other. The most numerous section had no rights, while the whole tendency of the law was to produce in the dominant minority, already flushed with the pride of conquest and with recent confiscations, all the vices of the most insolent aristocracy. Religious animosity, private quarrels, simple rapacity, or that mere love of the tyrannical exercise of despotic power which is so active a principle in human affairs, continually led to acts of the most odious oppression which it was dangerous to resent and impossible to resist. The law gave the Protestant the power of inflicting on the Catholic intolerable annoyance. To avoid it, he readily submitted to illegal tyranny, and even under the most extreme wrong it was hopeless for him to look for legal redress. All the influence of property and office was against him, and every tribunal to which he could appeal was occupied by his enemies. The Parliament and the Government, the corporation which disposed of his city property, the vestry which taxed him, the magistrate before whom he carried his complaint,

[1] 7 William III. c. 5; 10 William III. c. 8 and 13; 2 Anne, c. 6; 6 Anne, c. 6; 8 Anne, c. 3; 2 George I. c. 10; 6 George I. c. 10; 1 George II. c. 9; 9 George II. c. 3; 15 and 16 George III. c. 21.

[2] Scully on the *Penal Laws*, p. 344.

the solicitor who drew up his case, the barrister who pleaded it, the judge who tried it, the jury who decided it, were all Protestants. Of all tyrannies, a class tyranny has been justly described as the most intolerable, for it is ubiquitous in its operation, and weighs, perhaps, most heavily on those whose obscurity or distance would withdraw them from the notice of a single despot; and of all class tyrannies, perhaps the most odious is that which rests upon religious distinctions and is envenomed by religious animosities.[1] To create such a tyranny in Ireland was the first object of the penal laws, and the effect upon the Catholics was what might have been expected. Great numbers, by dishonest and hypocritical compliances, endeavoured to free themselves from a position that was intolerable. The mass of the people gradually acquired the vices of slaves. They were educated through long generations of oppression into an inveterate hostility to the law, and were taught to look for redress in illegal violence or secret combinations.

A second object of the penal laws was to reduce the Catholics to a condition of the most extreme and brutal ignorance. As Burke has justly said: 'To render men patient under such a deprivation of all the rights of human nature, everything which would give them a knowledge or feeling of those rights was rationally forbidden.'[2] The legislation on the subject of Catholic education may be briefly described, for it amounted

[1] We have a curious illustration of the operation of the religious distinctions in the humblest spheres, in the following notice in the Commons Journals. 'A petition of one Edward Spragg and others in behalf of themselves and other Protestant porters in and about the city of Dublin, complaining that one Darby Ryan, a captain under the late King James, and a Papist, buys up whole cargoes of coals and employs porters of his own persuasion to carry the same to customers, by which the petitioners are hindered from their small trade and gains.' The petition was referred to the Committee of Grievances to report upon it to the House.—*Commons Journals*, v. 2, p. 699.

Of the effect of the laws on the higher classes we may judge from the testimony of Burke. 'Sure I am that there have been thousands in Ireland who have never conversed with a Roman Catholic in their whole lives, unless they happened to talk to their gardeners' workmen, or to ask their way when they had lost it in their sports; or, at best, who had known them only as footmen or other domestics of the second and third order; and so averse were they some time ago to have them near their persons, that they would not employ even those who could never find their way beyond the stable. I well remember a great, and in many respects a good man, who advertised for a blacksmith, but at the same time added, "he must be a Protestant."'—*Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

[2] *Letter to a Peer of Ireland on the Penal Laws.*

simply to universal, unqualified, and unlimited proscription. The Catholic was excluded from the University. He was not permitted to be the guardian of a child. It was made penal for him to keep a school, to act as usher or private tutor, or to send his children to be educated abroad; and a reward of 10*l.* was offered for the discovery of a Popish schoolmaster.[1] In 1733, it is true, charter schools were established by Primate Boulter, for the benefit of the Catholics; but these schools—which were supported by public funds—were avowedly intended, by bringing up the young as Protestants, to extirpate the religion of their parents. The alternative offered by law to the Catholics was that of absolute and compulsory ignorance or of an education directly subversive of their faith.

The operation of these laws alone might have been safely trusted to reduce the Catholic population to complete degradation; but there were many other provisions, intended to check any rising spirit of enterprise that might appear among them, and to prevent any ray of hope from animating their lot. In the acquisition of personal property, it is true, there is but little in the way of restriction to be added. By the laws I have described, the immense majority of the Irish people were excluded, in their own country, from almost every profession, and from every Government office, from the highest to the lowest, and they were placed under conditions that made the growth of industrial virtues and the formation of an enterprising and aspiring character wholly impossible. They were excluded from a great part of the benefit of the taxes they paid. They were at the same time compelled to pay double to the militia, and in case of war with a Catholic power, to reimburse the damage done by the enemies' privateers. They could not obtain the freedom of any town corporate, and were only suffered to carry on their trades in their native cities, on condition of paying special and vexatious impositions known by the name of quarterage. They were forbidden, after a certain date, to take up their abodes in the important cities of Limerick and Galway, or to purchase property within their walls; and their progress in many industrial careers was effectually trammelled by the law already referred to, prevent-

[1] 7 William III. c. 4; 2 Anne, c. 6; 8 Anne, c. 3.

ing them from possessing any horse of the value of more than 5*l.*[1] The chief branches of Irish commerce and industry had, as we shall see, been deliberately crushed by law in the interests of English manufacturers; but the Catholics were not specially disabled from participating in them, and the legislator contented himself with assigning strict limits to their success by providing that, except in the linen trade, no Catholic could have more than two apprentices.[2]

In the case of landed property, however, the laws were more severe, for it was the third great object of the penal code to dissociate the Catholics as much as possible from the soil. Of this policy it may be truly said, that unless it was inspired by unmixed malevolence, and intended to make the nation permanently incapable of self-government, it was one of the most infatuated that could be conceived. Land being an irremoveable property, subject to Government control, has always proved the best pledge of the loyalty of its possessor, and its acquisition never fails to diffuse through a disaffected class conservative and orderly habits. One of the first objects of every wise legislator, and, indeed, of every good man, should be to soften the division of classes; and no social condition can be more clearly dangerous or diseased than that in which these divisions coincide with, and are intensified by differences of creed. To make the landlord class almost exclusively Protestant, while the tenant class were almost exclusively Catholic, was to plant in Ireland the seeds of the most permanent and menacing divisions. On the other hand, a class of Catholic landlords connected with one portion of the people by property and with another portion by religion could not fail to soften at once the animosities of class and of creed. They would have become the natural political leaders

[1] 7 William III. c. 5; 2 Anne, c. 6; 2 George I. c. 9; 9 George II. c. 6. See too Burke's *Tracts on the Popery Laws*. The law about horses was found so detrimental to the breed that it was afterwards enacted in Ireland, (8 Anne, c. 3) that Papists might possess 'stud mares and stallions, and the breed or produce thereof under the age of five years' of a greater value than 5*l.* A law similar to the Irish one was enacted against the English Catholics. It is frequently alluded to in the correspondence of Pope. See, too, the Prologue to Dryden's *Don Sebastian*.

Horses by Papists are not to be ridden,
But sure the muse's horse was ne'er forbidden,
For in no rate-book it was ever found
That Pegasus was valued at five pound.

[2] 8 Anne, c. 3.

of their co-religionists, and it is to the absence of such a class that both the revolutionary and sacerdotal extravagances of Irish Catholic politics are mainly to be attributed.

The great confiscations under James I., Cromwell, and William had done much to make the proprietary of Ireland exclusively Protestants. The penal laws continued the work. No Catholic was suffered to buy land, or inherit or receive it as a gift from Protestants, or to hold life annuities, or leases for more than thirty-one years, or any lease on such terms that the profits of the lands exceeded one-third of the rent. If a Catholic leaseholder, by his skill or industry, so increased his profits that they exceeded this proportion, and did not immediately make a corresponding increase in his rent, his farm passed to the first Protestant who made the discovery. If a Catholic secretly purchased either his own forfeited estate, or any other land in the possession of a Protestant, the first Protestant who informed against him became the proprietor. The whole country was soon filled with spies, endeavouring to appropriate the property of Catholics; and Popish discoveries became a main business of the law courts. The few Catholic landlords who remained after the confiscations, were deprived of the liberty of testament, which was possessed by all other subjects of the Crown. Their estates, upon their death, were divided equally among their sons, unless the eldest became a Protestant; in which case the whole was settled upon him.[1] In this manner Catholic landlords were gradually but surely impoverished. Their land passed almost universally into the hands of Protestants, and the few who succeeded in retaining large estates did so only by compliances which destroyed the wholesome moral influence that would naturally have attached to their position. The penal code, as it was actually carried out, was inspired much less by fanaticism than by rapacity, and was directed less against the Catholic religion than against the property and industry of its professors. It was intended to make them poor and to keep them poor, to crush in them every germ of enterprise, to degrade them into a servile caste who could never hope to rise to the level of their oppressors. The division of classes was made as deep as possible, and every precaution was

[1] 2 Anne, c. 6; 8 Anne, c. 3.

taken to perpetuate and to embitter it. Any Protestant who married a Catholic, or who suffered his children to be educated as Catholics, was exposed to all the disabilities of the code. Any Protestant woman who was a landowner, if she married a Catholic, was at once deprived of her inheritance, which passed to the nearest Protestant heir. A later law provided that every marriage celebrated by a Catholic priest between a Catholic and a Protestant should be null, and that the priest who officiated should be hung.[1]

The creation by law of a gigantic system of bribery intended to induce the Catholics to abandon or disguise their creed, and of an army of spies and informers intended to prey upon their property, had naturally a profoundly demoralising influence, but hardly so much so as the enactments which were designed to sow discord and insubordination in their homes. These measures, which may be looked upon as the fourth branch of the penal code, appear to have rankled more than any others in the minds of the Catholics, and they produced the bitterest and most pathetic complaints. The law I have cited, by which the eldest son of a Catholic, upon apostatising, became the heir-at-law to the whole estate of his father, reduced his father to the position of a mere life tenant, and prevented him from selling, mortgaging, or otherwise disposing of it, is a typical measure of this class. In like manner a wife who apostatised was immediately freed from her husband's control, and the Chancellor was empowered to assign to her a certain proportion of her husband's property. If any child, however young, professed to be a Protestant, it was at once taken from its father's care. The Chancellor, or the child itself, if an adult, might compel the father to produce the title-deeds of his estate, and declare on oath the value of his property; and such a proportion as the Chancellor determined was given to the child.[2] Children were thus set against their parents, and wives against their husbands, and jealousies, suspicions, and heart-burnings were introduced into the Catholic home. The undutiful wife, the rebellious and unnatural son, had only to add to their other

[1] 9 William III. c. 3; 7 George II. c. 5 and 6; 13 George II. c. 6. 19 George II. c. 13; 23 George II. c. 10.

[2] 2 Anne, c. 6; 8 Anne, c. 3.

crimes the guilt of a feigned conversion, in order to secure both impunity and reward, and to deprive those whom they had injured of the management and disposal of their property. The influence of the code appeared, indeed, omnipresent. It blasted the prospects of the Catholic in all the struggles of active life. It cast its shadow over the inmost recesses of his home. It darkened the very last hour of his existence. No Catholic, as I have said, could be guardian to a child; so the dying parent knew that his children must pass under the tutelage of Protestants.

This last provision, indeed, from its influence on property and especially on domestic happiness, was of pre-eminent importance. A Catholic landlord who in those evil days clung to his religion was probably actuated by a deep and fervent conviction. But if he happened to be seized with a mortal illness while his children were minors, he had the inexpressible misery of knowing that he could not leave them to the care of his wife, or of any Catholic friend, but that the Chancellor was bound to provide them with a Protestant guardian, whose first duty was to bring them up in the Protestant creed.[1] It would be difficult to conceive an enactment calculated to inflict a keener pang, and it is not surprising that great efforts were made to evade it. It sometimes happened that a Protestant friend of the dying man consented to accept the legal obligation of guardian on the secret understanding that he would leave the actual education of the children in the hands of any Catholic the family might select. The family would then petition that this Protestant

[1] This provision seems so atrociously cruel that it may be well to give the exact words of the law. 'That care may be taken for the education of children in the communion of the Church of Ireland as by law established; be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that no person of the Popish religion shall or may be guardian unto, or have the tuition or custody of any orphan, child, or children, under the age of twenty-one years; but that the same, where the person having or entitled to the guardianship of such orphan, child, or children, is or shall be a Papist, shall be disposed of by the High Court of Chancery to some near relation of such orphan, child, or children, being a Protestant, and conforming himself to the Church of Ireland as by law established, to whom the estate cannot descend, in case there shall be any such Protestant relation fit to have the education of such child; otherwise to some other Protestant conforming himself as aforesaid, who is hereby required to use his utmost care to educate and bring up such child or minor in the Protestant religion until the age of twenty-one years.'—2 Anne, c. 6, sec. 4. Any Papist who took upon himself the guardianship of a child was by the same Act made liable to a fine of 500*l.*, to be given to the Bluecoat Hospital in Dublin.

might be appointed guardian, and it was probable that their request would be acceded to. A case of this kind came under the cognisance of the Irish House of Commons in 1707. A Catholic gentleman, named Sir John Cotter, died, leaving an estate, in the county of Cork, and three minor children, the eldest being about fifteen years old. The very day of his funeral the eldest son was sent privately to London, with a Catholic gentleman named Galway, to be educated in his own faith. The Protestants at once called the attention of the Chancellor to the evasion, and he appointed a certain Alderman Chartres guardian to the minors, and compelled Galway to surrender the infant. Great efforts were then made to change the guardian, and at last a petition, alleging, it is said, falsely, that the minors were destitute of a guardian, and begging that a Protestant gentleman named Netterville might be appointed, was successful. Netterville became guardian, and he left the actual care of the children in the hands of Galway. The House, however, determined to prevent, if possible, the repetition of such an evasion. It resolved 'that any Protestant guardian that permits a Papist to educate or dispose of his ward does thereby betray the trust reposed in him, evade the law, and propagate Popery;' 'that any Papist who shall take upon him to manage and dispose of the substance and person of any infant committed to a Protestant guardian is guilty of a notorious breach of the law;' and 'that it is the indispensable duty of Protestant guardians to take the persons of their wards out of the custody of their Papist relations.' Netterville was summoned before the House, censured, and bound over to educate the minors as Protestants, and Galway was ordered into custody.[1] It is probable that no small amount of property passed in this manner into Protestant hands.[2]

As regards the celebration of the Catholic worship, the laws, if

[1] *Irish Commons Journals*, iii. 444–447, 454–455.

[2] We have an example of this in the old family of Cavanagh of Borris on the Barrow. The Catholic owner of the property died when his son was a minor, and two English tourists, who visited that part of the country in the middle of the eighteenth century, describe the result. 'The minor of a Roman Catholic, left so by the death of his father, is accounted the heir of the Crown, and the Lord Chancellor for the time being, is appointed his guardian, in order to bring him up as a Protestant; and this young gentleman is now in Westminster school for that purpose.'—*A Tour through Ireland by Two English Gentlemen* (1748), p. 225.

equally prohibitory, were at least less severely enforced. A law of Elizabeth, prohibiting the Catholic worship, and another law compelling all persons to attend the Anglican service, were unrepealed, and as a matter of fact the Catholic chapels in Ireland were closed during the Scotch rebellion of 1715. In general, however, the hopeless task of preventing some three-fourths of the nation from celebrating the rites which they believed essential to their eternal salvation was not attempted. The conditions of the Catholic worship were determined by the law of 1703, which compelled every Catholic priest, under the penalties of imprisonment and banishment, and of death if he returned, to register his name and parish, and other particulars essential to his identification,[1] and these registered priests might celebrate mass without molestation. 1,080 availed themselves of the privilege. It need hardly be said that they derived from the Government no pay, no favour of any description, except the barest toleration, but yet the Government undertook to regulate in the severest manner the conditions of their ministry. The parish priest alone could celebrate mass, and that only in his own parish. He was not permitted to keep a curate. No chapel might have bells or steeple, and no cross might be publicly erected. Pilgrimages to the holy wells were forbidden, and it is a characteristic trait that the penalty in default of the payment of a fine was the degrading one of whipping. If any Catholic induced a Protestant to join his faith, he was liable to the penalties of *præmunire*. If any priest became a Protestant he became entitled to an annuity, which was at first 20*l.* but was afterwards raised to 30*l.*, to be levied on the district where he resided.[2]

But soon another, and a far more serious measure was taken. In the reign of Anne large classes, both in England and in Ireland, who were perfectly innocent of any treasonable designs against the Government, and perfectly prepared to take the oath of allegiance which bound them to obey the existing ruler, and to abstain from all conspiracies against him, considered it distinctly sinful to take the oath of abjuration, which asserted that the son of James II. had 'no right or title whatsoever' to the Crown, and pledged the swearer to perpetual

[1] 2 Anne, c. 7; 4 Anne, c. 2. [2] 2 Anne, c. 6 and 7; 8 Anne, c. 3.

loyalty to the Protestant line. The distinction between the King *de jure* and the King *de facto* was here of vital importance. It was scarcely conceivable that any sincere and zealous Catholic could look upon the Revolution as a righteous movement, or could believe that James had justly forfeited his crown. The doctrine of passive obedience was not, it is true, taught in the Catholic Church, except among the Gallican divines, as emphatically as among Anglicans, but the belief in a Divine hereditary right of kings was universal, and no Catholic could seriously suppose that as a matter of right, James had forfeited his authority. The Catholics well knew that he had lost his crown mainly on account of his Catholicism, that the last great unconstitutional act with which he was reproached was an attempt to suspend the penal laws against themselves, that the object of the Act of Settlement was to secure that no Catholic should again sit upon the throne. At the same time they were perfectly ready to recognise the result of the war, to take the oath of allegiance to the existing Government, and to abstain from any conspiracy against it. When the priests registered themselves in 1704 no oath was required except the oath of allegiance; and it may be added, —though, indeed, after the recent legislation this consideration could have but little weight,—that it was expressly stipulated in the Treaty of Limerick that the oath of allegiance and 'no other' should be imposed upon the Irish Catholics. Yet in the face of these circumstances, and at a time when not a single act of treason or turbulence was proved against the Catholic priests, the Irish Parliament enacted in 1709 that by the March of the following year all the registered priests must take the oath of abjuration, under the penalty of banishment for life, and if they returned, of death.[1] At the same time any two magistrates were authorised to summon before them any Irish layman, to tender to him the same oath and to imprison him if he refused to take it. If the oath was tendered three times and he still refused to take it, he was guilty of *præmunire* and liable to perpetual imprisonment and the confiscation of all his property.[2] The clergy of the Church of England, as we have seen, accepted this oath; but, at the same time, it is not easy to see how any man could honestly take it who believed that doctrine of Divine hereditary right.

[1] 8 Anne, c. 3. [2] Ibid.

which was equally taught by the Church of Rome and by the Church of England. The Episcopalians in Scotland resolutely refused it, and from the very first the Roman Catholic authorities declared it to be sinful, and imposed penances on those who yielded. A very powerful memorial on the subject, drawn up in 1724 by Dr. Nary, who was probably the ablest Catholic priest then living in Ireland, clearly states their reasons.[1] The writer declares his full approval of the oath of allegiance. That oath binds all who take it to have no hand in any plot or conspiracy against the existing Government, and to do all in their power to suppress sedition, and every Catholic may with a perfect good conscience unreservedly take it. The oath of abjuration, on the contrary, contains three clauses which, in the opinion of the writer, must necessarily offend a Catholic conscience. It asserts that the late Prince of Wales, who was now the Pretender, had no right or title whatever to the Crown of England, and thus passes a judgment on the Revolution which cannot be accepted by anyone who believes in the Divine right of hereditary monarchy, and who denies that the measures of James in favour of Catholicism invalidated his title to the throne. It restricts the allegiance of the swearer to the Protestant line, and therefore implies that if the existing sovereign were converted to Catholicism, the Catholic, on that ground alone, would be bound to withdraw his allegiance from him. It contains the assertion that the oath was taken 'heartily, freely, and willingly,' which in the case of a sincere Roman Catholic would certainly be untrue.

It is said that not more than thirty-three of the registered priests actually took this oath,[2] and its chief result was that the whole system of registration fell rapidly into disuse.

[1] This very able paper, called 'The case of the Catholics of Ireland,' is printed in Hugh Reilly's *Genuine Hist. of Ireland*. In one of Chesterfield's letters to the Bishop of Waterford, he says: 'I would only require the priests to take the oath of allegiance simply, and not the subsequent oaths, *which in my opinion no real Papist can take*; the consequence of which would be that the least conscientious priests would be registered, and the most conscientious ones excluded' (Jan. 29, 1755). *Miscellaneous Works*, iv. 253. Archbishop Synge stated in 1722 that a large proportion of the Catholics were quite willing to take the oath if only the clause relating to the Divine right of the Pretender were omitted. See *his Letters to Archbishop Wake*, *British Museum Add. MSS.*, 6117, pp. 147–153.

[2] Nary. According to another account, thirty-seven. O'Connor's *Hist. of the Irish Catholics*, p. 179.

Such was the legislation in the case of registered priests who were supposed to enjoy the benefit of toleration. It is, however, obviously absurd to speak of the Catholic religion as tolerated in a country where its bishops were proscribed. In Ireland, all Catholic archbishops, bishops, deans, and vicars-general were ordered by a certain day to leave the country. If after that date they were found in it they were to be first imprisoned and then banished, and if they returned they were pronounced guilty of high treason and were liable to be hung, disembowelled, and quartered. Nor were these idle words. The law of 1709 offered a reward of 50*l.* to anyone who secured the conviction of any Catholic archbishop, bishop, dean, or vicar-general. In their own dioceses, in the midst of a purely Catholic country, in the performance of religious duties which were absolutely essential to the maintenance of their religion, the Catholic bishops were compelled to live in obscure hovels and under feigned names, moving continually from place to place, meeting their flocks under the shadow of the night, not unfrequently taking refuge from their pursuers in caverns or among the mountains. The position of all friars and unregistered priests was very similar. It was evident that if any strong religious feeling was to be maintained there must be many of them in Ireland. A Government which avowedly made the repression of the Catholic religion one of its main ends would never authorise a sufficient number of priests to maintain any high standard of devotion. The priests were looked upon as necessary evils, to be reduced to the lowest possible numbers. It was not certain that when the existing generation of registered priests died out the Government would suffer them to be replaced, and no licences were to be granted to those who refused the abjuration oath which the Catholic Church pronounced to be unlawful. Very naturally, therefore, numerous unregistered priests and friars laboured among the people. Like the bishops they were liable to banishment if they were discovered, and to death if they returned. It was idle for the prisoner to allege that no political action of any kind was proved against him, that he was employed solely in carrying spiritual consolations to a population who were reduced to a condition of the extremest spiritual as well as temporal destitution. Strenuous measures were taken to enforce the law. It was enacted that every mayor

or justice of the peace who neglected to execute its provisions should be liable to a fine of 100*l.*, half of which was to go to the informer, and should also on conviction be disabled from serving as justice of the peace during the remainder of his life. A reward of 20*l.*, offered for the detection of each friar or unregistered priest, called a regular race of priest-hunters into existence. To facilitate their task the law enabled any two justices of the peace at any time to compel any Catholic of eighteen or upwards to declare when and where he last heard mass, who officiated, and who was present, and if he refused to give evidence he might be imprisoned for twelve months, or until he paid a fine of 20*l.* Anyone who harboured ecclesiastics from beyond the sea was liable to fines which amounted, for the third offence, to the confiscation of all his goods.[1] The Irish House of Commons urged the magistrates on, to greater activity in enforcing the law, and it resolved 'that the saying or hearing of mass by persons who had not taken the oath of abjuration tended to advance the interests of the Pretender,' and again, 'that the prosecuting and informing against Papists was an honourable service to the Government.'[2] But perhaps the most curious illustration of the ferocious spirit of the time was furnished by the Irish Privy Council in 1719. In that year an elaborate Bill against Papists was carried, apparently without opposition, through the Irish House of Commons, and among its clauses was one sentencing all unregistered priests who were found in Ireland to be branded with a red-hot iron upon the cheek. The Irish Privy Council, however, actually changed the penalty of branding into that of castration,[3] and

[1] 9 William III. c. 1; 2 Anne, c. 3; 4 Anne, c. 2; 8 Anne, c. 3. For the whole subject of the penal laws, I would refer to the most admirable 'Introduction historique' to the work of Gustave de Beaumont, *L'Irlande politique, sociale, et religieuse.* Very few writers have ever studied Irish history so accurately or so minutely as M. de Beaumont, and he brought to it the impartiality of a foreigner, and the political insight and skill which might be expected from the intimate friend and the faithful disciple of De Tocqueville.

[2] Parnell *On the Penal Laws*, p. 60. See, too, *Commons' Journal*, iv. 25.

[3] They write, 'The common Irish will never become Protestants or well affected to the Crown while they are supplied with priests, friars, &c., who are the fomenters of all rebellions and disturbances here. So that some more effectual remedy to prevent priests and friars coming into this kingdom is perfectly necessary. The Commons proposed the marking of every person who should be convicted of being an unregistered priest, friar, &c., and of remaining in this kingdom after May

sent the Bill with this atrocious recommendation to England for ratification. The English ministers unanimously restored the penalty of branding. By the constitution of Ireland a Bill which had been returned from England might be finally rejected but could not be amended by the Irish Parliament; and the Irish House of Lords, objecting to a retrospective clause which invalidated certain leases which Papists had been suffered to make, threw out the Bill.[1] It is, however, a memorable fact in the moral history of Europe that as late as 1719 this penalty was seriously proposed by the responsible Government of Ireland. It may be added that a law imposing it upon Jesuits was actually in force in Sweden in the beginning of the century, and that a paper was circulated in 1700 advocating the adoption of a similar atrocity in England.[2]

One more illustration may be given of the ferocity of the persecuting spirit which at this time prevailed in Ireland, both in the native Legislature and in the English Government. In 1723, when the alarm caused by Atterbury's plot was at its height, the Irish House of Commons, at the express invitation of the Lord Lieutenant, proceeded to pass a new Bill against

1, 1720, with a large P to be made with a red-hot iron on his cheek. The Council generally disliked that punishment, and have altered it to that of castration, which they are persuaded will be the most effectual method that can be found out, to clear this nation of those disturbers of the peace and quiet of the kingdom, and would have been very well pleased to have found out any other punishment which might in their opinion have remedied the evil. If your Excellencies shall not be of the same sentiments, they submit to your consideration whether the punishment of castration may not be altered to that proposed by the Commons, or to some other effectual one which may occur to your Lordships. Signed — Bolton, Middleton, Jo. Meath, John Clogher, Santry, St. George Newton, Oliver St. George, E. Webster, R. Tighe. *Lords-Lieutenant and Lords-Justices' Letters*, Dublin State Paper Office (Aug. 17, 1719).

[1] A very erroneous and exaggerated version of this story, based, I believe, on an anonymous *Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Irlande* (see O'Connor's *Hist. of the Irish Catholics*, p. 190), published about the middle of the last century, has been repeated by Curry, Plowden, and other writers. Mr. Froude (*English in Ireland*, i. pp. 546–557) has correctly stated the facts, and has devoted some characteristic pages to their apology. I have examined the original letters on the subject in the Record Office. One of these, written by Webster (a leading Government clerk) from Dublin Castle, is dated August 26, 1719. The reply by Craggs is dated September 22, 1719.

[2] *Harleian Miscellany*, iv. 415–423. The writer says: 'Since the same was enacted into a law and practised upon a few of them, that kingdom [Sweden] hath never been infested with Popish clergy or plots.' In a 'Collection of Irish Speeches, Trials, &c., from 1711 to 1733,' in the British Museum, there is an anonymous paper, printed at Dublin in 1725, recommending the castration of ordinary criminals.

unregistered priests. It was entitled 'A Bill for Explaining and Amending the Acts to Prevent the Growth of Popery and for Strengthening the Protestant Interest in Ireland;' and the heads of the Bill, after passing through both houses, were sent over to England with the warm recommendation of the Irish Privy Council. The bill as it issued from the Commons is still preserved, and it is no exaggeration to say that it deserves to rank with the most infamous edicts in the whole history of persecution. One of its clauses provided that all unregistered priests should depart out of Ireland before March 25, 1724, and that all found after that date should be deemed guilty of high treason, except they have in the meantime taken the oath of abjuration. In this manner it was proposed to make the whole priesthood in a purely Catholic country liable to the most horrible form of death known to British law, unless they took an oath which their Church authoritatively pronounced to be sinful. By another clause it was provided that all bishops, deans, monks, and vicars-general found in the country after the same date should be liable to the same horrible fate, and in their cases the abjuration oath was not admitted as an alternative. By a third clause it was ordered that any person who was found guilty of affording shelter or protection to a Popish dignitary should suffer death as a felon without benefit of clergy. By a fourth clause a similar penalty was decreed against any Popish schoolmaster or Popish tutor in a private house, and, in order that the law should be fully enforced, large rewards were promised to discoverers of priests, bishops, or harbourers who gave evidence leading to conviction, and these rewards were doubled if they themselves prosecuted the offender to conviction. Happily, this atrocious measure never came into effect. The alarm caused in England by the designs of the Pretender passed away. The excitement caused by Wood's halfpence was at its height, and it is probable that the humane feelings of Walpole were revolted by a law that was worthy of Alva or Torquemada. The Bill was not returned from England, and it was never revived.[1]

[1] 'Heads of a Bill for Explaining and Amending the Acts to Prevent the Growth of Popery,' &c. There are several other provisions in these heads—among others, one for making marriages between Catholics and Protestants celebrated by priests invalid. The heads of the Bill are in the Irish Record Office in Dublin. They have, as far as I know, never

A modern historian, who has displayed rare literary skill in defending many forms of oppression and of cruelty, has lately made the penal code familiar to the public. His great objection to this legislation is that it was not strenuously enforced, and with the exception of the law offering the estate of the Catholic to his eldest son, in the event of his apostacy, he has apparently discovered but little in its provisions repugnant to his sentiments either of justice or of humanity. As regards the system of direct religious repression, it is true that it became, as we shall hereafter see, gradually inoperative. It was impossible, without producing a state of chronic civil war, to enforce such enactments in the midst of a large Catholic population. Rewards were offered for the apprehension of priests, but it needed no small courage to face the hatred of the people. Savage mobs were ever ready to mark out the known priest-hunter, and unjust laws were met by illegal violence. Under the long discipline of the penal laws, the Irish Catholics learnt the lesson which, beyond all others, rulers should dread to teach. They became consummate adepts in the arts of conspiracy and of disguise. Secrets known to

been printed, though they well deserve to be. In the Irish State Paper Office at the Castle (*Lords-Lieutenant and Council's Letters*, vol. xvi), there is a letter strongly recommending the measure to the English authorities (Dec. 1723), and in Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, ii. 358, there is a letter from the Duke of Grafton recommending it. Mr. Froude, warmly supports this attempted legislation, but he has suppressed all mention of the penalties contained in the bill, and even uses language which would convey to any ordinary reader the impression that no specific penalties were determined. His assertion that the bill after passing the Commons was unaltered by the Council is doubtful. The Duke of Grafton writes, 'The House of Commons have much at heart this bill. It has been mended since it came from them, as commonly their bills want to be' (Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 358). It is possible, however, that this may refer to alterations in the Lords. Archbishop Synge mentions in one of his letters that the bill was somewhat moderated there, though it was still left so savage that Synge (though a very strong Protestant) was unable to support it. 'If,' he says, 'any Papist or Popish priest will not solemnly upon oath renounce the Pretender and also the Pope's power of deposing princes and absolving subjects from their allegiance, let him leave the kingdom or be dealt with as a traitor. But if such a man is ready to do all this, and farther to give security to the Government for his good and loyal behaviour, I must own that I cannot come into a law to put him to death, under the name indeed of high treason, yet in reality only for adhering to an erroneous religion and worshipping God according to it.' Archbishop Synge's *Letters British Museum Add. MSS.*, 6117, p. 169. Mr. Froude strongly (though I hope inaccurately) denies that the failure of the bill was due to the greater tolerance of the English Government. He says: 'The Wood hurricane was at this moment unfortunately at its height, and absorbed by its violence any other consideration.'—*English in Ireland*, i. 559-561.

hundreds were preserved inviolable from authority. False intelligence baffled and distracted the pursuer, and the dread of some fierce nocturnal vengeance was often sufficient to quell the cupidity of the prosecutor. Bishops came to Ireland in spite of the atrocious penalties to which they were subject, and ordained new priests. What was to be done with them? The savage sentence of the law, if duly executed, might have produced a conflagration in Ireland that would have endangered every Protestant life, and the scandal would have rung through Europe. The ambassadors of Catholic Powers in alliance with England continually remonstrated against the severity of English anti-Catholic legislation, and on the other hand the English ministers felt that the execution of priests in Ireland would indefinitely weaken their power of mitigating by their influence the persecution of Protestants on the Continent. The administration of the law was feeble in all its departments, and it was naturally peculiarly so when it was in opposition to the strongest feelings of the great majority of the people. It was difficult to obtain evidence or even juries.[1] It was soon found too that the higher Catholic clergy, if left in peace, were able and willing to render inestimable services to the Government in suppressing sedition and crime, and as it was quite evident that the bulk of the Irish Catholics would not become Protestants, they could not, in the mere interests of order, be left wholly without religious ministration. Besides, there was in reality not much religious fanaticism. Statesmen of the stamp of Walpole and Carteret were quite free from such a motive, and were certainly not disposed to push matters to extremities. The spirit of the eighteenth century was eminently adverse to dogma. The sentiment of nationality, and especially the deep resentment produced by the English restrictions on trade, gradually drew different classes of Irishmen together. The multitude of lukewarm Catholics who abandoned their creed through purely interested motives lowered the religious temperature among the Protestants, while, by removing some of the indifferent, it increased it among the Catholics, and the former

[1] Catholics were not excluded from petty juries in ordinary cases, but they were excluded (6 Anne, c. 6) in all cases relating to the Anti-Catholic laws.

grew in time very careless about theological doctrines. The system of registration broke down through the imposition of the abjuration oath, and through the extreme practical difficulty of enforcing the penalties. The policy of extinguishing Catholicism by suppressing its services and banishing its bishops was silently abandoned; before the middle of the eighteenth century the laws against Catholic worship were virtually obsolete,[1] and before the close of the eighteenth century the Parliament which in the beginning of the century had been one of the most intolerant had become one of the most tolerant in Europe.

In this respect the penal code was a failure. In others it was more successful. It was intended to degrade and to impoverish, to destroy in its victims the spring and buoyancy of enterprise, to dig a deep chasm between Catholics and Protestants. These ends it fully attained.[2] It formed the social condition, it regulated the disposition of property, it exercised a most enduring and pernicious influence upon the character of the people, and some of the worst features of the latter may be distinctly traced to its influence. It may be possible to find in the statute-books both of Protestant and Catholic countries laws corresponding to most parts of the Irish penal code, and in some respects surpassing its most atrocious provisions, but it is not the less true that that code, taken as a whole, has a character entirely distinctive. It was directed, not against the few, but against the many. It was not the persecution of a sect, but the

[1] As early as 1715 Archbishop King wrote to Sunderland: 'By law they [the Roman Catholics] are allowed a priest in every parish, which are registered in pursuance of an Act of Parliament made about ten years ago. All bishops, regulars, &c., and all other priests then not registered, are banished, and none allowed to come into the kingdom under severe penalties. *The design was that there should be no succession*, and many of those then registered are since dead; yet for want of a due execution of the laws many are come in from foreign parts, and there are in the country Popish bishops concealed, that ordain many. Little inquiry of late has been made into these matters.'—Mant's *Hist. of the Church of Ireland*, ii. 212. See, too, a very interesting report of the House of Lords in 1731, appointed to consider the state of Popery in this kingdom. O'Connor's *Hist. of the Irish Catholics*, Append. p. xxiii.

[2] Arthur Young, who was in Ireland between 1776 and 1778, says: 'I have conversed on the subject with some of the most distinguished characters in the kingdom, and I cannot after all but declare that the scope, purport, and aim of the laws of discovery as executed, are not against the Catholic religion, which increases under them, but against the industry and property of whoever professes that religion.'—Arthur Young's *Tour in Ireland*, ii. 141.

degradation of a nation. It was the instrument employed by a conquering race, supported by a neighbouring Power, to crush to the dust the people among whom they were planted. And, indeed, when we remember that the greater part of it was in force for nearly a century, that the victims of its cruelties formed at least three-fourths of the nation, that its degrading and dividing influence extended to every field of social, political, professional, intellectual, and even domestic life, and that it was enacted without the provocation of any rebellion, in defiance of a treaty which distinctly guaranteed the Irish Catholics from any further oppression on account of their religion, it may be justly regarded as one of the blackest pages in the history of persecution. In the words of Burke, 'It was a complete system, full of coherence and consistency, well digested and well composed in all its parts. It was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man.' The judgment formed of it by one of the noblest representatives of English Toryism was very similar. 'The Irish,' said Dr. Johnson, 'are in a most unnatural state, for we there see the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the Ten Persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics.' [1]

'The penal laws against the Roman Catholics, both in England and Ireland, were the immediate consequence of the Revolution, and were mainly the work of the Whig party. In Ireland some of them were carried under William, but by far the greater number of the disabilities were comprised in what Burke has truly described as 'the ferocious Acts of Anne.' These laws were carried in 1703-4 and in 1709, and the last of them was brought forward by the Government of Wharton, one of the most conspicuous members of the party. It is somewhat re-

[1] Burke's letter to Sir H. Langrishe. Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, c. xxix. The judgment of Hallam is but little less emphatic. 'To have exterminated the Catholics by the sword or expelled them like the Moriscoes of Spain would have been little more repugnant to justice and humanity, but incomparably more politic.'—*Hist. of England*, iii. p. 401. Mr. Gladstone describes the code as 'that system of penal laws against Roman Catholics at once pettifogging, base, and cruel.'—*The Vatican Decrees*, p. 24.

markable, however, that the Catholics were not at this time directly deprived of the elective franchise, except so far as the imposition of the oath of abjuration operated as a disqualification. Their extreme poverty, the laws relating to landed property, and their exclusion from the corporations, no doubt, reduced the number of Catholic voters to infinitesimal proportions, but the absolute and formal abolition of the class did not take place till 1727, and appears to have been due to the influence of Primate Boulter, who was also the author of severe laws against nominal converts. In England, as in Ireland, William would gladly have given toleration to the Catholics,[1] but he was not prepared to risk any serious unpopularity for their sake. The English Act of 1699 is said to have been brought forward by opponents of the Government in order to embarrass him, but it was accepted by a ministry of which Somers was the leading member, and, in spite of the promises which William, before the Revolution, had made to the Emperor, Bishop Burnet assures us that 'the Court promoted the Bill.'[2]

The extent and complication of the Irish penal code, and the great importance of its political consequences, has made it necessary for me to dwell upon it at considerable length, but it will appear evident from the foregoing review that, severe as were the Irish laws, they were exceeded in stringency by those which were imposed upon the English Catholics. In the latter case, however, an evasion was much easier, nor could the Catholics, except under very abnormal circumstances, become a danger to England. In numbers they were probably less than one in fifty of the population.[3] Among the freeholders, according to a computation made under William, they were not quite one in 186,[4] and the part of the population which was most Protestant was precisely that which was most active, enterprising,

[1] 'That he [William] favoured the Roman Catholics as far as he could, and that he was frequently called upon by the Emperor to do so, is most certain.'—Lord Dartmouth's note to *Burnet*, ii. 228, 229.

[2] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 228, 229. Burnet (who supported this Bill) appears to think it originated with the Jacobites, who wished to set William in opposition to the national sentiment. Lord Dartmouth in his note says: 'He [Burnet] does the Jacobites a great deal of wrong; for it was the Whigs gave out that the King was turned Jacobite.' At all events it seems clear that the Bill originated with the Opposition and was adopted by the Government.

[3] Macaulay's *Hist. of England*, c. vi.

[4] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. pt. 2, appen. to c. i. p. 40.

and influential. The Catholics abounded chiefly in Lancashire, Staffordshire, and Sussex; but, except in London, they were very rare in the trading towns.[1] Their actual condition under the laws I have described is a question of some difficulty and perplexity. Judging by the mere letter of the law we should imagine that their worship was absolutely suppressed, that their children were deprived of all ecclesiastical education, and that their estates must have speedily passed into other hands. Nor is it easy to understand how laws so recent and so explicit could be evaded. Their history, however, is somewhat like that of the anti-Christian laws in the Roman Empire. It is certain that during long periods of time the early Christians professed, taught, and propagated their religion without either concealment or molestation, though by the letter of existing laws they were subject to the most atrocious penalties. It is equally certain that during the greater part of the reigns of Anne, George I., and George II. the Catholic worship in private houses and chapels was undisturbed, that the estates of Catholics were regularly transmitted from father to son, and that they had no serious difficulty in educating their children. The Government refused to put the laws against the priests into execution, and legal evasions were employed and connived at. Most of the more active spirits of English Catholicism took refuge on the Continent, and in the beginning of the eighteenth century British or Irish seminaries, colleges, or monasteries were thickly scattered through Spain, Portugal, Flanders, France, and Italy.[2]

Of the condition of those at home but few notices remain. In 1700 two letters, written to a Member of Parliament, were published, complaining bitterly of their activity.[3] It was stated that there were then three Popish bishops exercising their functions in England—Bishop Leyhorn in London and

[1] Chamberlayne's *Present State of Great Britain* (1710), p. 162. In an able pamphlet called *Britain's Just Complaint of her Late Measure*, ascribed to Sir J. Montgomery, it is said: 'The Catholics of Britain are not one of a hundred; they have neither heads, hearts, nor hands enough to force a national conversion. As the Protestants are the most numerous, so the laws and constitution are upon their side.'—Somers' *Tracts*, x. 458.

[2] See a list of these establishments in *The Present Danger of Popery* (1703), pp. 4–6.

[3] Ibid. See also another anonymous tract, called *Considerations of the Present State of Popery in England* (1723).

the surrounding counties, Bishop Gifford in Wales and the western counties, and Bishop Smith in the north; that nearly every Popish lord or gentleman of substance had a priest domesticated in his family; that there were but few parishes in London in which the mass was not celebrated; that Petre, the brother of the well-known councillor of James, and the head of the English Jesuits, was still living under the name of Spencer in Marylebone[1]; and that many converts to Popery were made. One conversion—that of the daughter of Lord Baltimore—appears to have attracted some attention. In 1706 a remarkable petition was presented to Parliament from the gentry and clergy of South Lancashire, containing very similar complaints. The petitioners dilated especially upon the number and missionary activity of the Lancashire priests, upon the open manner in which Catholics thronged to mass, and upon the erection of a building which was believed to be an endowed Popish seminary. The House of Lords considered these statements worthy of serious attention, and presented an address to the Queen, complaining of the growing insolence of the Catholics, and requesting that the Protestant clergy in each diocese and parish should be enjoined to prepare returns stating their number, quality, estates, and places of abode.[2] How far these measures proved efficacious it is difficult to say, but in 1711 we find the Lower House of Convocation complaining that the Papists 'have swarmed in our streets of late years, and have been very busy in making converts,' and attributing to the mode in which they conducted their controversy a considerable part of the prevailing infidelity.[3] The reign of Anne is the period in which the most

[1] Oliver, in his *Collections illustrating the Biography of the Scotch, English and Irish Jesuits*, states that Spencer was the name taken by Edward Petre himself (the Privy Councillor), in the earlier part of his mission in England. The chapters in Butler's *Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics* devoted to this period are unfortunately extremely meagre.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 516–517. After the rebellion of 1715, when an Act was carried obliging all Catholics and Nonjurors to transmit to Commissioners appointed for the purpose a register of their estates, it appeared that the yearly value of the estates of Lancashire recusants was 13,158*l.*—a very large sum when we consider the rude state of agriculture and the undeveloped condition of the country.—Picton's *Memorials of Liverpool*, pt. i. p. 165.

[3] Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, p. 416. In August 1708, Nicholson, the bishop of Carlisle, writes to the Primate, 'Popery has advanced by very long strides of late years in this country, and too many of our magistrates love to have it so. At the very

ferocious of the penal laws in Ireland were enacted, but in England the Catholics were not violently persecuted. The Government was interceding with the Emperor in favour of his persecuted Protestant subjects, and naturally shrank from measures that would impair its influence. The existence of a powerful party attached to the Popish Pretender, the semi-Catholic doctrines of some of the Nonjurors, the formal negotiation opened by Archbishop Wake with a view to a union of the Anglican and Gallican Churches, the dispositions of the Queen, which were not violently anti-Catholic, and perhaps also the fact that a Catholic poet was at the head of English literature, had all tended to improve the position of the sect. The law which determined that any Catholic over eighteen who did not take the oath of supremacy, or make a declaration of Protestantism, should be incapable of inheriting land, and that the estate he would otherwise have inherited should pass to the next Protestant heir, was evaded and made almost nugatory. It was intended to compel all Catholic landlords to sell their property, but it was determined that the burden of proof rested with the Protestant claimant, and that it was for him to prove that the Catholic had not made this declaration; and a Bill which was introduced in 1706 to remedy this defect by making it necessary for the Catholic not only to make the declaration, but also to prove that he had done so, was rejected chiefly on the ground that it would injure the negotiations of England in favour of the persecuted subjects of the Emperor.[1] The reward of 100*l.* offered for the conviction of a Catholic priest might be expected to produce numerous informers; but the judges were very severe in the evidence they required, and it was decided that those who prosecuted in order to obtain the reward must

time that the French were upon our coasts and our people daily expected the news of their being landed, the wealthier of our Papists instead of being seized were cringed to with all possible tenders of honour and respect, and those very gentlemen who were entrusted with the taking of them into custody seemed rather inclined to list themselves in their service.' British Museum Add. MSS. 6116. Shortly after this time considerable scandal was caused by the publication of a clever but very scurrilous poem against Protestantism, called *England's Reformation from the Time of Henry VIII. to the end of Oates's Plot*, by Thomas Ward. It was written in Hudibrastic verse, and professed to be published at Hamburg in 1710.

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 514–515. Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 229, 440. A few English cases relating to property which fell under the code and were tried

do so at their own expense.[1] In the Hanoverian period, as well as in the reign of Anne, the Catholics enjoyed a considerable, though precarious, toleration. An acute observer, whose tour through England and Wales was published in 1722, tells us that 'to the north of Winchester there was a very large monastery, a handsome part of which still remained, called Hide House, inhabited by Roman Catholics, where they have a private chapel for the service of the gentlemen of that religion thereabouts, of which there are several of note, and who live very quietly and friendly with their neighbours; they have also a private seminary for their children, three miles off, where they prepare them for the colleges abroad.'[2] The same traveller visited the holy well of St. Winifred in Wales, and found the Catholic pilgrimages to it undiminished. The Catholic church at the well had, it is true, been converted into a Protestant school, but 'to supply the loss of this chapel the Roman Catholics have chapels erected almost in every inn for the devotion of the pilgrims that flock hither from all the Popish parts of England.'[3] Three years later Defoe's well-known 'Tour through Great Britain' appeared. He mentions without comment 'Popish chapels' among the religious edifices existing in London,[4] and, having visited Durham, he writes of it: 'The town is well-built but old, full of Roman Catholics, who live peaceably and disturb nobody and nobody them, for we, being there on a holiday, saw them going as publicly to mass as the Dissenters did on other days to their meeting-houses.'[5] The Earl of Derwentwater, who was executed for his complicity in the rebellion of 1715, was a Catholic, and it was a popular tradition that his body, on its journey from London to its burial place in Scotland, was moved only by night, and rested every day in a place dedicated to the Catholic worship.[6]

under Anne and her two successors will be found in Bacon's *Abridgment of the Law* (7 ed.) vi. 125–132. See too Howard's *Popery Cases*, pp. 301–324.

[1] A legal opinion to this effect was given July 22, 1714. Domestic Papers, Record Office.

[2] *A Journey through England: Familiar Letters from a Gentleman here to his Friend abroad* [by Macky], vol. ii. p. 26.

[3] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 134. See too, on the pilgrimages to this well, Rush's *Hibernia Curiosa* (1769), p. 4. St. Winifred was the first stage from Chester to Holyhead.

[4] Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain*, ii. 156.

[5] Ibid. iii. 189.

[6] Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, c. lxxi.

As the century advanced, the complaints of the growth of Popery became very numerous. The law of England still laid down that 'when a person is reconciled to the See of Rome, or procures others to be reconciled, the offence amounts to high treason,'[1] and the sentence of perpetual imprisonment still hung over every Catholic priest; but yet it appears evident that Catholicism in certain classes was extending. It was asserted in 1735 that there was 'scarcely a petty coffee-house in London where there is not a Popish lecture read on Sunday evenings.'[2] Reports, which appear to have been entirely calumnious, were spread that Bishop Butler had died a Catholic.[3] 'The growth of Popery,' wrote Doddridge, in 1735, 'seems to give a general and just alarm. A priest from a neighbouring gentleman's family makes frequent visits hither, and many of the Church people seem Popishly inclined.'[4] Secker complained, in 1738, that 'the emissaries of the Romish Church . . . have begun to reap great harvests in the field.'[5] Sherlock, in the letter which he issued on the occasion of the earthquake of 1750, mentions the 'great increase of Popery' among the crying evils of the time.[6] Browne, in his 'Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Time,' which appeared a few years later, echoes the same complaint. 'The priests,' he writes, 'are assiduous in making proselytes, and in urging their party to make them. There is at present a gentleman in the West of England who openly gives 5*l.* to every person who becomes a proselyte to the Roman Church; and the additional bribe of a Sunday dinner for every such person that attends mass. Allurements of the same kind are known to prevail in most parts of the kingdom, and among those of the highest rank, though not so openly declared.'[7] A fashion which had arisen among ladies of wearing Capuchin cloaks was somewhat absurdly reprehended, on the ground that it was teaching men 'to view the cowl not only with patience but complacency.'[8] The leaders of the Dissenters were so sensible of the danger from the activity of the priests that they

[1] Blackstone.

[2] This was stated in the *Free Briton*, of January 1735. See a very interesting collection of passages on this subject, chiefly from old newspapers, in Miss Wedgwood's *John Wesley*, pp. 281–283.

[3] Bartlett's *Life of Butler*, p. 164.

[4] Doddridge's *Diary*, iii. p. 182.

[5] Secker's *Charges*, Charge i. 1738.

[6] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1750.

[7] Browne's *Estimate*, ii. p. 140–141.

[8] See Wedgwood's *Wesley*, p. 283.

established in 1734 and 1735 a course of anti-Popery lectures, in Salters' Hall; and the laws against priests were so entirely in abeyance that two of these had a formal controversy with two Protestant divines.[1] In 1738 Bishop Gibson, with a view of checking the Romish propagandism, collected and republished, under the title of 'A Preservation against Popery,' the anti-Papal tracts which had appeared in England between the Restoration and the Revolution.

At the time of the rebellion of 1745, it is true, the laws were more severely enforced. A proclamation was issued, banishing all Catholics from London, and forbidding them to go more than five miles from their homes; and another proclamation offered a reward for the capture of priests and Jesuits, some of whom were actually apprehended. A mass-house was about this time destroyed by the populace, at Stokesley, in Yorkshire, and another burnt by the sailors at Sunderland.[2] Resident Catholic ambassadors complained of the severities of the Government against their co-religionists; but these severities do not appear to have been very serious, and they were purely exceptional events produced by the existence of a great public danger, and by the notorious sympathy of the Catholics with the invaders. In general the chief effects of the legislation against the Catholic worship appear to have been that it was carried on unostentatiously in private houses, that proselytism was difficult and somewhat dangerous, and that any Catholic who was suspected of disaffection was absolutely at the mercy of the Government. The unequal and oppressive taxation, however, and the innumerable disqualifications, bringing with them a great social stigma, still continued, and the laws against the priesthood offered such inducements to informers that their position was one of continual danger. As we shall hereafter see, they were occasionally prosecuted at a much later period than that with which we are at present concerned; and in 1729—in the reign of George II. and under the ministry of Townshend and Walpole—a Franciscan friar, named Atkinson, died in Hurst Castle, in the seventy-fourth year of his life and

[1] Wilson's *Hist. of Dissenting Churches*, ii. 368. The debate was published by both sides, and was therefore, I suppose, at least partially public. This book furnishes considerable evidence of the activity of the Popish controversy among the Dissenters.

[2] *British Chronologist*, Dec. 1745, Jan. 1746.

the thirtieth of his imprisonment, having been incarcerated in 1700, for performing the functions of a Catholic priest.[1] The only minister who appears to have had any real wish to relieve the Catholics was Stanhope, who had contemplated some mitigations of the penal code. In 1719 negotiations took place between his ministry and some leading Catholics, through the intervention of Strickland, the Bishop of Namur; but difficulties raised on the Catholic side, for a time impeded them, and the disasters of the South Sea Company brought the design to a termination.[2] As far as the condition of Catholics was improved under George II., it was only by a milder administration of existing laws, and by the more tolerant maxims which prevailed among the higher clergy. In the days of Cromwell and Milton it had been argued that Catholicism was idolatry, and that it ought therefore to be suppressed, by virtue of the Old Testament decree against that sin. In the teaching of the Latitudinarian divines, and of the classes who adopted the principles of Locke, this doctrine had disappeared, and the measures against Catholicism were defended solely on the ground of the hostility of that religion to the civil government.

In Scotland the Kirk ministers watched it with a fiercer animosity than the English clergy; but even in Scotland it was not extinguished. It found a powerful protector in the ducal family of Gordon. In 1699 the Duke of Gordon had been arrested for holding Popish meetings in his lodging at Edinburgh, but he was liberated after a fortnight's imprisonment. In 1722 a meeting of fifty Catholics was surprised in the house of the Dowager Duchess of Gordon, and the priest for a time imprisoned. He was soon, however, bailed, and not appearing to stand his trial, was outlawed. The Gordon family abandoned Catholicism on the death of the second Duke, in 1728, and from that time we very rarely find traces of Catholicism in the Lowlands. In the Highlands it had still its devoted adherents. A small cottage, called Scalan, at Glenlivat, one of the wildest and most untrodden spots among the mountains of Aberdeenshire, continued during most of the eighteenth century

[1] *Historical Register for* 1729 (Oct. 15). Butler's *Historical Memoirs*, ii. 63.
[2] Ibid. ii. 59.

to be a seminary, where eight or ten youths were usually educating for the priesthood. Many of the old superstitions lingered side by side with the new faith, and an occasional priest, or monk, or even Jesuit, celebrated in private houses the worship of his forefathers. In the western islands, in several of the mountain valleys of Moray, and especially on the property of the Dukes of Gordon, the Catholics continued numerous, and they appear to have been but little molested. As late as 1773, when Dr. Johnson visited the Hebrides, there were two small islands, named Egg and Canna, which were still altogether inhabited by Catholics.[1]

The other class excluded from the benefits of the Toleration Act, and existing only in violation of the law, consisted of all those who impugned either the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity or the supernatural character of Christianity, or the divine authority of Scripture. All such persons, by a law of William, were disabled, upon the first conviction, from holding any ecclesiastical, civil, or military office, and were deprived, upon the second conviction, of the power of suing or prosecuting in any law court, of being guardian or executor, and of receiving any legacy or deed of gift. They were also made liable to imprisonment for three years; but in case they renounced their error publicly, within four months of the first conviction, they were discharged from their disabilities.[2] Avowed Unitarianism has never been, and is never likely to be a very important or very aggressive sect, for the great majority of those who hold its fundamental tenet are but little disposed to attach themselves to any definite religious body, or to take any great interest in sectarian strife. The small school which followed Socinus had at first but few disciples in England, and exercised no appreciable influence in the conflict of parties. Under Edward VI., Joan Bocher and a Dutchman named Van Parris had been burnt for their heresies

[1] See Lachlan Shaw's *Hist. of Moray* (1775), p. 380; Chambers' *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, iii. 204–205, 466, 554; Martin's *Description of the Western Islands*. Johnson's *Tour in the Hebrides*, pp. 162, 196; Burton's *Hist. of Scotland*, ii. 359–361; Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, xiii. 33, and a few notices of Jesuits in Scotland, in Oliver's *Collections illustrating the Biography of Scotch, English, and Irish Members of the Society of Jesus*.

[2] 9 & 10 William III. c. 32.

concerning the Trinity; and two other heretics were burnt, on a similar charge, under James I. The term Unitarian, however, appears to have been first adopted by John Biddle, a teacher of some learning and of great zeal and piety, who, during the stormy days of the Commonwealth, defended the doctrines of Socinus with unwearied energy, both in the pulpit and with his pen. A law had recently been passed, making it a capital offence to impugn the received doctrine of the Trinity, and this law would probably have been applied to Biddle, had not the influence of Cromwell and the support of some powerful friends been employed to screen him. As it was, his life was a continual martyrdom. His works were burnt by the hangman, he was banished for a time to the Scilly Islands, fined, and repeatedly imprisoned, and he at last died in prison in 1662.[1] He left a small sect behind him, its most remarkable members being Emlyn, to whose long imprisonment I have already referred, and Firmin, a London merchant, of considerable wealth and influence, who was one of the foremost supporters of every leading work of charity in his time, and who was intimately acquainted with Tillotson and several other leading Anglican divines.[2] At his expense several anonymous tracts in defence of Socinian views were published. Less advanced heresies about the Trinity are said to have been widely diffused in the seventeenth century. Arianism may be detected in the 'Paradise Lost.' It tinged the theology of Newton, and it spread gradually through several dissenting sects. Early in the eighteenth century it rose into great prominence. Whiston, who was one of the most learned theologians of his time, and the professor of mathematics at Cambridge, openly maintained it. Lardner, who occupies so conspicuous a place among the apologists for Christianity, was at one time an Arian, though his opinion seems to have ultimately inclined to Socinianism.[3] Views which were at least semi-Arian appeared timidly in the writings of Clarke; and the long Trinitarian controversy, in which Sherlock, Jane, South, Wallis, Burnet, Tillotson, and many

[1] See Wallace's *Anti-Trinitarian Biography*.

[2] *Life of Mr. Thomas Firmin, citizen of London.* By J. Cornish. 1780.

[3] See Kippis's Life of Lardner, prefixed to Lardner's Works, p. xxxii. His ultimate view is said to have been that 'Jesus was a man appointed, exalted, loved, and honoured by God beyond all other beings.'

others took part, familiarised the whole nation with the difficulties of the question. It was, however, among the Presbyterians that the defections from orthodoxy were most numerous and most grave. In 1719 two Presbyterian ministers were deprived of their pastoral charge on account of their Unitarian opinions, but soon either Arianism or Socinianism became the current sentiments of the Presbyterian seminaries, and by the middle of the eighteenth century most of the principal Presbyterian ministers and congregations had silently discarded the old doctrine of the Trinity.[1]

When the intention of Whiston and Clarke to stir this question was first known, Godolphin, who was then in power, remonstrated with them, saying to the latter that 'the affairs of the public were with difficulty then kept in the hands of those that were at all for liberty; that it was therefore an unseasonable time for the publication of a book that would make a great noise and disturbance, and that therefore the ministers desired him to forbear till a surer opportunity should offer itself.'[2] The storm of indignation that arose in Convocation upon the appearance of the work of Whiston in some degree justified the judgment, but, on the whole, few things are more remarkable in the eighteenth century than the ease and impunity with which anti-Trinitarian views were propagated. The prosecution of Emlyn called forth an emphatic and noble protest from Hoadly, and though Whiston was deprived of his professorship, and censured by Convocation, he was not otherwise molested. Noisier controversies drew away most of the popular fanaticism, and the suppression of Convocation was eminently favourable to religious liberty. A Bill which was brought forward in 1721, supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by some other prelates, to increase the stringency of the legislation against anti-Trinitarian writings was rejected,[3] and the laws against anti-Trinitarians were silently disused. Works, however, which were directed against the Christian religion were still liable to prosecution, though the measures taken against them were not usually very severe. 'The Fable of the Bees' of Mandeville, the 'Christianity Not Mysterious'

[1] Bogue and Bennett's *Hist. of Dissenters*, ii. 300–303. See, too, Lindsey's *Historical View*.

[2] Whiston's *Memoirs of Clarke*, p. 25.

[3] *Parl. Hist.* vii. 893–895.

of Toland, the 'Rights of the Christian Church' by Tindal, and the 'Posthumous Works' of Bolingbroke, were all presented by the Grand Jury of Middlesex. When Collins, in 1713, published his 'Discourse on Freethinking,' the outcry was so violent that the author thought it prudent to take refuge for a time in Holland. Woolston—whose mind seems to have been positively disordered—having published, in 1727 and the two following years, some violent discourses impugning the Miracles of Christ, was sentenced to a year's imprisonment, and to a fine of 1,000*l.*—a sentence against which the apologist Lardner very nobly protested, and which Clarke endeavoured to mitigate. When Toland visited Ireland his book was burnt by order of the Irish Parliament, and he only escaped arrest by a precipitate flight.[1] Towards the middle of the century, however, interest in these subjects had almost ceased. The 'Treatise on Human Nature,' by Hume, which appeared in 1739, though one of the greatest masterpieces of sceptical genius, fell still-born from the press, and the posthumous works of Bolingbroke, in spite of the noisy reputation of their author, scarcely produced a ripple of emotion.[2] A letter written by Montesquieu to Warburton was quoted with much applause, in which that great French thinker somewhat cynically argued that, however false might be the established religion in England, no good man should attack it, as it injured no one, was divested of its worst prejudices, and was the source of many practical advantages.[3] An acute observer on the side of orthodoxy noticed that there was at this time little sceptical speculation in England, because there was but little interest in any theological question;[4] and a great

[1] South wrote with great delight: 'Your Parliament presently sent him packing, and without the help of a faggot soon made the kingdom too hot for him.' See Disraeli's *Calamities of Authors*, ii. 133.

[2] Hume's *Autobiography*. Browne's *Estimate*, i. 56.

[3] Referring to Bolingbroke's philosophy, he wrote, 'What motive can there be for attacking revealed religion in England? In that country it is so purged of all destructive prejudices that it can do no harm, but on the contrary is capable of producing numberless good effects. I am sensible that in Spain or Portugal a man who is going to be burnt . . . hath very good reason to attack it. . . . But the case is very different in England, where a man that attacks revealed religion does it without the least personal motive, and where this champion if he should succeed—nay, should he be in the right too—would only deprive his country of numberless real benefits for the sake of establishing a merely speculative truth.'—*Annual Register*, 1760, p. 189.

[4] Browne's *Estimate*, i. 52–58.

sceptic described the nation as 'settled into the most cool indifference with regard to religious matters that is to be found in any nation of the world.'[1] Latitudinarianism had spread widely, but almost silently, through all religious bodies, and dogmatic teaching was almost excluded from the pulpit. In spite of occasional outbursts of popular fanaticism, a religious languor fell over England, as it had fallen over the Continent; and if it produced much neglect of duty among clergymen, and much laxity of morals among laymen, it at least in some degree assuaged the bitterness of sectarian animosity and prepared the way for the future triumph of religious liberty.

[1] Hume's *Essay on National Characters.*

CHAPTER III.

WHILE the changes described in the last chapter were taking place, the history of parties in England continued to present a singular monotony. The stigma of Jacobitism still rested on the Tories, though Bolingbroke did everything in his power to efface it. This great Tory statesman had soon discovered that the confidence of the Pretender was never given to any but the most bigoted Catholics, and that his narrow and superstitious mind was wholly unsuited for the delicate task of reconciling the political principles of the Tory party with their religious interests and sympathies. Slighted and neglected by the master for whom he had sacrificed so much, finding his political judgment habitually treated as of less value than that of ignorant and inexperienced fanatics, he soon openly quarrelled with the Pretender, received his dismissal in 1716, and with a heart burning with resentment abjured all further connection with Jacobitism. The importance of such a secession from the Jacobite ranks was self-evident. Bolingbroke was the greatest orator and the most brilliant party leader of his time. He had been, and, in spite of recent errors, he would probably, if restored to English political life, again be, the leader of the Church and of the country party, and he could do more than any other living man to reconcile the Tory party to the new dynasty. His first object was to be restored to his country, fortune, and titles; he offered his services unreservedly to the Government, and his violent quarrel with the Jacobites was a pledge of his sincerity.

The Whig ministry were, however, in general far from desiring to accept the offer. On public grounds they probably doubted the sincerity, or at least the permanence of his conversion. 'Parties,' as Pulteney once said, 'like snakes, are moved by their tails.' It was certain that the Tory party in 1716 was

almost wholly Jacobite. There was nothing in the principles or antecedents of Bolingbroke to make it improbable that if it again suited his interests he would place himself in sympathy with his followers, and it was evident that his presence would give them an importance they would not otherwise possess. Besides this, it was the obvious party interest of the Whigs to exclude from the arena the most formidable of all their opponents, and there was no other statesman whom they regarded with such animosity. Much as they desired the maintenance of the dynasty, they had little desire to see the Tory party reconciled to it. They well knew that their monopoly of place and power depended upon the success with which they represented their opponents, both to the King and to the country, as necessarily Jacobite. As Bolingbroke himself very happily said, in the disposition of parties in England, 'the accidental passions' of the people were on one side, 'their settled habits of thinking' on the other. The natural preponderance of classes and sentiment was with the Tories, but the temporary association of Toryism with Popery and with rebellion had thrown all power into the hands of the Whigs. A Tory party thoroughly reconciled to the dynasty and guided by a statesman of great genius and experience would probably in no long time become the ruler of the State.

Such were probably the motives of the Whig leaders in rejecting the overtures of Bolingbroke. Walpole, who, no doubt, clearly saw in him the most dangerous of competitors, was especially vehement and especially resolute in maintaining his ostracism, and it was not until 1723 that Bolingbroke obtained, by the influence of the King's mistress, a pardon which enabled him to return to England. With the assent of Sir William Windham, Lord Bathurst, and Lord Gower, three of the most considerable men in the Tory party, he in that year made a formal offer of co-operation to Walpole, but that offer was absolutely declined.[1] The Act of Attainder, which was still in force, and which could only be annulled by Parliament, deprived him of his estates and of his seat in the House of Lords, and although he succeeded in 1725 in regaining the former by Act

[1] Walpole to Townshend, August 3, 1723. Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 263–264.

of Parliament, he was still steadily excluded from the latter. The adroitness and splendid eloquence with which in his last speech in the House of Lords he had met the ministerial charges against the Peace of Utrecht were not soon forgotten, and the Whig leaders and the Whig Parliaments were fully resolved to paralyse so formidable an adversary. The career of Bolingbroke is in some respects one of the most unfortunate in English history. Gifted, by the confession of all who knew him, with abilities of the very highest order, some fatal obstacle seemed always in his path. The inveterate dilatoriness of Oxford, the death of the Queen in the most critical moment of his life, the incapacity and incurable bigotry of the Pretender, frustrated all his efforts, and he found himself in the very zenith of his transcendent powers condemned to political impotence. The first of living orators, he was shut out for ever from Parliament, which at a time when public meetings were unknown, was the only theatre for political eloquence. A devoted Tory, and at the same time a bitter enemy to the Pretender, he found his party, which was naturally the strongest in England, reduced to insignificance through the imputation of Jacobitism. His political writings continued for many years to agitate the country, and he was indefatigable in his efforts to unite the scattered fragments of opposition into a new party, taking for its principle the suppression of corruption in Parliament; but his efforts met with little success, and a politician excluded from the Legislature could never take a foremost place in English politics. Once, indeed, after many years of weary waiting, the favour of the Prince of Wales seemed likely to break the spell of misfortune, but the sudden death of his patron again clouded his prospects and drove him in despair from public life.

The Whig party, under these circumstances was almost uncontrolled, and its strength was not seriously impaired by the great schism which broke out in 1717, when Lord Townshend was dismissed from office, when Walpole, with several less noted Whigs, resigned, and went into violent opposition, and when the chief power passed into the hands of Sunderland and Stanhope.

It is the plan of this book to avoid as much as possible discussing the personalities of history, except so far as they illustrate

the political character and tendencies of the time, and I shall therefore content myself with the most cursory reference to this schism. It was almost inevitable that divisions should have taken place. The party was in an overwhelming majority. Its leaders were very much upon a level; for Walpole, though far abler than his colleagues, was somewhat inferior to several of them in the weight of his political connections, and he had not yet attained the Parliamentary ascendency he afterwards enjoyed. The Hanoverian ministers, and a crowd of rapacious Hanoverian favourites of the King, were perpetually endeavouring to make English politics subservient to Hanoverian interests, and to obtain places, pensions, or titles for themselves; and another serious element of complication and intrigue was introduced by the strong dislike subsisting between the King and the Prince of Wales, and the extreme jealousy which the former entertained of all statesmen who were supposed to have confidential intercourse with the latter or with his partisans. The bitter hatred, both personal and political, that subsisted between the first three Hanoverian sovereigns and their eldest sons, though it threw great scandal and discredit on the royal family and added largely to the difficulties of parliamentary government, was probably on the whole rather beneficial to the dynasty than otherwise, as it led the most prominent opponents of the existing Governments to place their chief hopes in the heir-apparent to the Crown. The Hanoverian tendencies of the sovereign were, however, an unmixed source of weakness. The whole Whig party, though they had gratified the King by supporting the acquisition of Bremen and Verden, offended him by refusing to follow the advice of his favourite Hanoverian minister, Bernsdorf, to commence immediate hostilities against the Czar when he invaded the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg in 1716. Walpole and Townshend soon became peculiarly distasteful to the German party around the King, and they were accustomed to express, in no measured terms, their indignation at the venality and the intrigues of the Hanoverian favourites. On the other hand, Sunderland was intriguing eagerly against his colleagues. The son of the able and corrupt statesman who played so great a part in the reigns of James II. and of William, and the son-in-law of Marlborough, he had for some time shared the suspicion with which his father-in-law was regarded by George I. Though his introduction into the Cabinet

during the last reign had been looked upon as one of the most important and most decisive victories of the Whig party, and though he had long been one of the most conspicuous debaters in the House of Lords, he found himself excluded, together with Marlborough, from the list of Lords Justices to whom the Government of the country was in part entrusted on the death of the Queen. He was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which removed him from active political life; and although he afterwards succeeded Wharton as Privy Seal, he still found the influence and favour of Lord Townshend greatly superior to his own, and he showed his discontent by very rarely taking any part in the defence of the Government. At last, however, he succeeded, in the summer of 1716, during a brief residence in Hanover, in obtaining the complete favour and confidence of the King. Stanhope, who was Secretary of State, and who had been appointed to that office by Townshend, threw himself into the measures of Sunderland. Some alleged delays of Townshend in negotiating the treaty with France, some alleged relations between him and the party of the Prince of Wales, furnished pretexts, and, after passing through more than one phase which it is not here necessary to chronicle, the disagreement deepened into an open breach. In the new Government Sunderland and Addison were joint Secretaries of State, while Stanhope was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The conduct of Stanhope in this transaction is extremely questionable, but he appears to have been in general a high-minded as well as brave and liberal man, well skilled in military matters and in foreign policy, and of that frank and straightforward character which often succeeds better in public life, and especially in English public life, than the most refined cunning,[1] but without much administrative or parliamentary

[1] Lady W. Montague writes: 'Earl Stanhope used to say that during his ministry he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which as they thought it impossible to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write information to their respective Courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them.' *Letters* (Lord Wharncliffe's ed.) iii. 54. Compare the following account of Lord Palmerston. 'I have heard him [Lord Palmerston] say that he occasionally found that they [foreign ministers] had been deceived by the open manner in which he told them the truth. When he had laid before them the exact state of the case, and announced his own intentions, they went away convinced that so skilful and experienced a diplomatist could not possibly be so frank as he appeared, and, imagining some deep design in his words, acted on their own idea of what he really meant, and so misled their own selves.'—Ashley's *Life of Palmerston*, ii. 301.

ability, and wholly unfit to manage the finances of the country. In the following year, as foreign affairs became more entangled, the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer was given to Aislabie. Sunderland became First Lord of the Treasury, and Stanhope, together with an earldom, assumed the office of Secretary of State, which gave him the direction of foreign policy. In home policy the ministry was chiefly distinguished by the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, by the unsuccessful attempt to carry the mischievous peerage Bill, which I have already described, and by the privileges granted to the South Sea Company, which speedily led to the most terrible disasters. Its foreign policy was more brilliant, for it was during its term of office, and in a great degree in consequence of its measures, that the ambitious projects of Alberoni were defeated. In 1720 the schism was partly healed by the return of Walpole and Townshend to office, though not to a position in the Government at all equivalent to that of which they had been deprived. Townshend became President of the Council, and Walpole Paymaster of the Forces; and about the same time, and chiefly through the influence of Walpole, there was an outward reconciliation between the King and the Prince of Wales.

The divergence of feelings and interests between the two sections of the Cabinet was, however, by no means at an end when the disasters following the South Sea Bubble gave a complete ascendency to the party of Walpole. The South Sea Company had, as we have seen, been established by Harley, in 1711, for the purpose of restoring the national credit, which had been shaken by the downfall of the Whigs; and although its trade in the Spanish waters was greatly limited by the provisions of the Peace of Utrecht, and greatly interrupted by the subsequent hostilities with Spain, the company possessed such important commercial privileges that it continued to be one of the most considerable and esteemed mercantile corporations in the country. The policy of gradually paying off the debt by incorporating it with the stock of flourishing companies was in high favour, and in 1717 an Act was passed permitting the proprietors of certain short annuities amounting to about 135,000*l.*, which had still twenty-three years to run, to subscribe the residue of the term into South Sea stock, at the rate

of eleven and a half years' purchase, receiving five per cent. on the principal. By this transaction, and by an additional advance of about 544,000*l.*, the capital of the company was increased to 11,746,844*l.* In 1719, however, the project was conceived of enormously enlarging its scope. The national debt consisted partly of redeemable funds, which might be paid off whenever money could be found for that purpose, and partly of irredeemable ones, usually for about ninety-nine years, which could not be paid without the consent of the proprietors. The directors of the company proposed, by purchase or subscription, to absorb both kinds of debt, and they anticipated that the advantages they could offer were such that they could make arrangements with the proprietors of the irredeemable annuities for the conversion of these latter into redeemable funds, that they could consolidate the different funds into a single stock, that at the end of seven years they could reduce the interest on the national debt from five to four per cent., and that by the profits of a company so greatly enlarged and so closely connected with the Government they could establish a large sinking fund for paying off the national debt. The prospect in the outset rested upon very erroneous notions of the value of the South Sea trade; but the competition between the company and the Bank, which looked upon the scheme with great jealousy, soon made it wholly chimerical. The South Sea directors resolved, at all costs, to obtain their ends, and they accordingly offered no less than 7,567,000*l.*, if all the debts were subscribed, and a proportionate sum for any part of them; and they also proposed to pay, for the use of the public, one year's purchase of such of the long irredeemable annuities as should not be brought into their capital. These terms were accepted by the Government, and the Bill was passed in April 1720. It was wholly impossible that it should have issued in anything but disaster; but all the devices of the Stock Exchange were employed artificially to raise the price of stock. For several years—and, indeed, ever since the Revolution—a spirit of reckless speculation had been spreading through England. Stock-jobbing had become a favourite profession. Lottery after lottery had been launched with success, and projects hardly less insane than those of the South Sea year found numerous supporters. The

scheme of Law had produced a wild enthusiasm of speculation in France, and the contagion was felt in England. The South Sea project was too complicated to be generally understood. There was no efficient organ of financial criticism. The Government warmly supported the scheme. The large sum offered by the company, which made success impossible, stimulated the imaginations of the people, who fancied that a privilege so dearly purchased must be of inestimable value, and the complication of credulity and dishonesty, of ignorance and avarice, threw England into what it is scarcely an exaggeration to term a positive frenzy. The mischief affected all classes. Landlords sold their ancestral estates; clergymen, philosophers, professors, dissenting ministers, men of fashion, poor widows, as well as the usual speculators on 'Change, flung all their possessions into the new stock. Many foreigners followed the example, and the Canton of Berne, in its corporate capacity, is said to have speculated largely in it. Among those to whom large amounts of stock had been improperly assigned were the Duchess of Kendal and the Countess of Platen the two mistresses of the King, Sunderland the prime minister, Aislabie the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Stanhope the Secretary of State, and the two Craggs. Among the great crowd of honest speculators were Pope and Walpole and Gay, Bingham, the learned historian of Christian antiquities, Chandler, one of the most conspicuous of the Dissenters. Rumours of intended cessions of gold mines of Peru, in exchange for Gibraltar and Port Mahon, were industriously circulated and readily believed. Dividends were officially promised, which could never be paid. The stock rose to 1,000. Then came the inevitable reaction. The bubble burst. Bankers and goldsmiths who had lent money on it were everywhere failing. The stock fell faster than it had risen, and in a few weeks the Eldorado dreams were dispelled, and disaster and ruin were carried through all classes of the nation.[1]

It is a striking instance of the good fortune which at this time attended the Whig party, that the schism of 1717 had withdrawn a certain proportion of its leaders from the Government, and consequently from all responsibility for the disaster.

[1] Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 483. Tindal. Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iii.

Had it been otherwise, the whole party might have fallen beneath the outburst of popular indignation, and a party which was now purely Jacobite might have been summoned to the helm. Walpole, however, who since his resignation had systematically opposed every measure of the ministry, had both in Parliament and by his pen severely criticised the South Sea scheme, and although he had been partially reconciled to the Government and had accepted office about three months before the final crash, public opinion very justly held him wholly innocent of the disaster, while his well-known financial ability made men turn to him in the hour of distress, as of all statesmen the most fitted to palliate it. Lord Stanhope, who, whatever his errors may have been, showed at least a perfect integrity during these transactions, died in the February of 1720-21, and was replaced as Secretary of State by Lord Townshend. Aislabie was driven ignominiously from his position of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sunderland, the Prime Minister, though acquitted on the charge of corruption, was obliged, by the stress of public feeling, to resign his office. Walpole became both First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the death of Sunderland, in April 1722, which closed the schism of the Whig party, removed the last serious obstacle from his path. In his career, more than in that of any other statesman, the character of Whig policy during the eighteenth century was reflected; and his influence, in a very great degree, determined the tone and character of parliamentary government in England.

Born in 1676, of a Norfolk family of great antiquity, moderate wealth, and considerable political influence, Robert Walpole was at first, as a second son, intended for the Church, was educated with this object at Eton, where he was the contemporary and rival of St. John, and had already begun, with some distinction, his career at Cambridge when the death of his elder brother induced his father to withdraw him from the University, and soon after plunged him into politics. His family possessed the control of no less than three seats, and he entered Parliament for one of them upon the death of his father, in 1700, and at once attached himself to the Whigs. He appeared from the beginning a shrewd, cautious, laborious

and ambitious man, of indomitable courage and unflagging spirits, surpassed by many in the grace and dignity of eloquence, but by no one in readiness of reply, fertility of resource, and aptitude for business. He became a member of the Council of Admiralty in 1705, Secretary of War in 1708, Treasurer of the Navy in 1709. In 1710 he was one of the managers of the Sacheverell impeachment, a measure of which he privately disapproved. On the downfall of the ministry, he took a conspicuous and brilliant part in defending the financial policy of Godolphin, who had been accused by the Tory House of Commons of gross extravagance and corruption, and he from this period obtained the reputation of 'the best master of figures of any man of his time.' In 1712, the Tories, being in power, marked their animosity against him by expelling him from Parliament, on the charge of corruption, and consigning him for a few months to the Tower; but the condemnation, which was a mere party vote, left no stigma on his name, while the species of political martyrdom he underwent only served to enhance his reputation. He soon returned to Parliament, was recognised as the most powerful supporter of the Protestant succession, rose again to office upon the accession of George I., was Chairman of the Secret Committee for investigating the circumstances of the Peace of Utrecht, became Paymaster of the Forces in 1714 and First Lord of the Treasury, and at the same time Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1715. We have just seen how the division of the party in 1717 for a time interrupted his career; how, by a singular good fortune, he was in opposition when the South Sea scheme was devised; and how the ruin of his most formidable competitors and his own financial talents brought him to the foremost place. In the midst of the panic, and exasperation both of Parliament and of the nation, he acted with great coolness, courage, and good sense. He moderated the proceedings that were taken against the guilty directors, and he gradually restored public credit by measures which met with some opposition at the time, and which, many years after, became the objects of virulent attacks,[1] but which had undoubtedly the effect of calming public opinion, and greatly mitigating the

[1] See the details of these measures in Coxe, Sinclair, and Macpherson. The attacks upon Walpole's honesty in this matter do not appear to have

inevitable suffering. His first scheme—which was originally suggested by Jacombe, the Under-Secretary of War—was a division of the stock between the South Sea Company, the Bank, and the East India Company; but another plan was afterwards devised. It is not necessary to enter at length into its somewhat complicated details. It is sufficient to say that the whole sum of rather more than 7,000,000*l.*, which the company had engaged to pay the public, was ultimately remitted, that the confiscated estates of the directors were employed in the partial discharge of the incumbrances of the society, and that a division of stock being made among all the proprietors, it produced a dividend of 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per cent. From this time, for more than twenty years, the ascendency of Walpole was complete. Carteret, who made some slight efforts to rally the party, which had been left leaderless by the deaths of Stanhope and Sunderland, or at least to maintain some real authority in the ministry, succumbed in the beginning of 1724, and went into a kind of honourable exile as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The death of the King had long been looked upon as the event which must necessarily terminate the administration of his favourite minister, for the enmity between George I. and his eldest son had never in reality ceased, and the quarrel between them broke out with renewed violence on the occasion of the birth of the Prince's second son, in 1721. The Prince desired the Duke of York to be godfather to the child. The King insisted on giving that post to the Duke of Newcastle. A strange, undignified, but most characteristic scene ensued. On the occasion of the christening, in the Princess's bedroom, and in presence of the King, the Prince, trembling with passion, strode up to the Duke of Newcastle, shaking his hand at him in menace, and shouting, in his broken English, 'You are a rascal; but I shall find you!' The King ordered his son to be put under arrest, and that night he and his wife were driven from the palace. From this time there was open and complete hostility, not only between the King and the Prince of Wales, but also between their adherents. No communication

been made till fourteen years later, and were probably quite unfounded. They will be found drawn out at great length in Ralph's *Critical Hist. of the Administration of Walpole.*

was suffered to pass between them, and Walpole especially was made the subject of violent abuse by the heir to the throne. But the expectations of his enemies were soon disappointed. For a few days, indeed, Walpole was out of office, the King having placed the management of affairs in the hands of Sir Spencer Compton, who had been his treasurer, and who was at this time Speaker of the House of Commons, and also Paymaster of the Forces. Sir Spencer, however, was entirely incapable of occupying a foremost place. He found himself unable even to draw up a King's Speech, and in his difficulty he resorted to Walpole himself. The influence of Cardinal Fleury, who urged the danger to the French alliance of a change of Government, and the warm support of Queen Caroline, brought Walpole back to office, where he became more absolute than before. Sir Spencer Compton readily acquiesced in his own deposition, was created Earl of Wilmington in 1728, and two years later became Privy Seal, and then President of the Council in the ministry of his former rival. Townshend, who alone could in any degree maintain a balance of power, was compelled to resign in 1730, and the ascendency of Walpole continued unbroken till 1742.

It is the fault of many historians and the misfortune of many statesmen that the latter are often judged almost exclusively by the measures they have passed, and not at all by the evils they have averted. In the case of Walpole this mode of judgment is peculiarly misleading, and it is remarkable that great practical politicians have usually estimated him far more highly than men of letters.[1] The long period of his rule was signalised by very few measures of brilliancy or enduring value. His faults both as a man and a statesman were glaring and repulsive, and he never exercised either the intellectual fascination that belongs to a great orator, or the moral fascination that belongs to a great

[1] In the present generation Walpole has been made the subject of elaborate pictures by three very eminent writers, who differ as widely as possible in their political views and in the character of their minds—by Macaulay in his *Essay on Horace Walpole's Letters*; Lord Stanhope in his *Hist. of England*; and Mr. Carlyle in his *Life of Frederick the Great*. It is curiously instructive to compare their estimates of him with that of Burke in his *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, and that of Sir Robert Peel in a remarkable paper in the *Stanhope Miscellanies* (first series). Lord J. Russell has always estimated Walpole at least as highly as Sir R. Peel.

character. He was not a reformer, or a successful war minister, or a profound and original thinker, or even a tactician of great enterprise, and yet he possessed qualities which have justly placed him in the foremost rank of politicians. Finding England with a disputed succession and an unpopular sovereign, with a corrupt and factious Parliament, and an intolerant, ignorant, and warlike people, he succeeded in giving it twenty years of unbroken peace and uniform prosperity, in establishing on an impregnable basis a dynasty which seemed tottering to its fall, in rendering, chiefly by the force of his personal ascendency, the House of Commons the most powerful body in the State, in moderating permanently the ferocity of political factions and the intolerance of ecclesiastical legislation. A simple country squire, with neither large fortune nor great connections, he won the highest post in politics from rivals of brilliant talent, and he maintained himself in it for a longer period than any of his predecessors. No English minister had a sounder judgment in emergencies or a greater skill in reading and in managing men. He obtained a complete ascendency over George I., although, the King speaking no English, and his minister no French or German, their only communications were in bad Latin, and although the favourite mistress of the King was his enemy. On the death of George I., when the other leading politicians turned at once to Mrs. Howard, the mistress of the new sovereign, as the future source of political power, Walpole at once recognised the ability and unobtrusive influence of the Queen, and by her friendship he was soon absolute at Court. Though George II. came to the throne with an intense prepossession against him, and though the King was as fond of war as his minister of peace, he soon acquired the same influence over the new sovereign as he had exercised over his father. His chancellor, Lord Macclesfield, excited a storm of indignation, and at last an impeachment, by corruptly selling masterships of Chancery; but Walpole, without unfairly abandoning his colleague, met the charges against him with such consummate tact and such judicious candour that the affair rather strengthened than weakened his administration. He managed the House of Commons with an admirable mixture of shrewdness and frankness, and his facility of access, his unfailing good humour, the ease with which he

threw aside the cares of office, his loud, ringing laugh, and the keen zest with which he rode to the hounds, contributed perhaps as much as his higher qualities to win the affections of the country squires, who were still so powerful in politics. Parliamentary government, under his auspices, acquired a definite form and a regular action, and he was a great Parliamentary leader at the time when the art of Parliamentary leadership was altogether new.

As a statesman the chief object of his policy was to avoid all violent concussions of opinion. He belonged to that class of legislators who recognise fully that government is an organic thing, that all transitions to be safe should be the gradual product of public opinion, that the great end of statesmanship is to secure the nation's practical well-being, and allow its social and industrial forces to develop unimpeded, and that a wise minister will carefully avoid exciting violent passions, provoking reactions, offending large classes, and generating enduring discontents. In many periods the policy of evading or postponing dangerous questions has proved revolutionary, or has, at least, increased the elements of agitation. In the time of Walpole, and in the degree in which he practised it, it was eminently wise. England was at this time menaced by one of the greatest calamities that can befall a nation—the evil of a disputed succession. Large classes were alienated from the Government. Strong religious and political passions had been aroused against it, and there were evident signs in many quarters of a disposition to subordinate national to dynastic considerations. In an earlier period of English history causes of this nature had deluged England with blood for more than sixty years. Since the time of Walpole very similar influences have corroded the patriotism and divided the energies of the leading nation on the Continent, and have led to the most crushing catastrophe in its history. To the systematic moderation of Walpole it is in a great degree due that the revolutionary spirit took no root in England, that the many elements of disaffection gradually subsided, and that the landed gentry were firmly attached to the new dynasty. To conciliate this class was a main branch of his policy, and if this course was dictated by his own party interests, it is equally true that it was eminently in accordance with the

interests of the country. The Revolution was in a great measure a movement of the town populations in opposition to the country gentry, and had it not been for the mediatorial influence of the aristocracy, who were connected politically with the first, and socially with the second, it might have led to a most dangerous antagonism of classes. It is, however, a remarkable fact that in the very first year of the Revolution, the Legislature, while gratifying the whole people by abolishing the unpopular hearth tax, conferred a special favour upon the landlords by a law granting bounties for the export of corn when the home price had sunk to a certain level.[1] That this measure was economically erroneous will now hardly be disputed, but it probably had a real political value, and its enactment immediately after the great Whig triumph is a striking illustration of the conciliatory spirit that has usually presided over English legislation. Still the country gentry were, on the whole, hostile to the change, and the chief burden of the additional taxation was thrown upon them. The land tax of four shillings in the pound, which was carried in 1692, was extremely unequal in its operation, for it was based on a valuation furnished chiefly by the landlords themselves, but in principle the equity of the tax was generally acknowledged. By no other form of taxation could a sufficient sum be raised to meet the expenses of the war. For many generations extraordinary emergencies had been met by temporary taxes upon land. The prevailing economical notion that of all forms of industry agriculture alone is really productive helped to justify the tax, and it also contributed to redress a serious injustice which had been done to other classes under Charles II. In that reign, as is well known, the feudal obligations which still rested upon land were abolished, and, as a compensation, excise duties were imposed on beer, ale, and other liquors, and on licences, and were assigned in perpetuity to the Crown; and thus the burden which had from time immemorial been attached to one particular species of property was shifted to the whole community.[2]

Under these circumstances the land tax required no justification, and at first met with no serious opposition. It is not surpris-

[1] 1 William and Mary, c. 12.
[2] See McCulloch on *Taxation*, p. 58. Sinclair *on the Revenue*, i. 300.

ing, however, that its unprecedented magnitude, and also the necessity of continuing it in time of peace, should have aggravated the irritation with which, on other grounds, the country gentry regarded the Revolution. Their political alienation was, perhaps, the most serious danger of the new Government. It was entirely impossible that the reigning family should be firmly established, and that constitutional Parliamentary government should continue if the landed gentry were estranged from the existing order of things; and their natural sympathies were strongly Tory, while Government, in the first two Hanoverian reigns, was exclusively Whig. The hatred the ordinary country gentlemen felt towards foreigners, towards traders, and towards Dissenters was hardly less strong than that dread of Popery which had induced them reluctantly to acquiesce in the Revolution. It was impossible, however, that they should long look upon Walpole as an enemy to their order or their interests. By birth and position he belonged to their class. He was so imbued with their tastes that, as Lord Hardwicke assures us, he always opened the letters of his gamekeeper before any others, even before the letters from the King.[1] The Saturday holiday of Parliament still remains as a memorial of his country habits, for, as the Speaker Onslow informs us, it was originally instituted in order that Walpole might once a week gratify his passion for hunting. In the contest upon the Peerage Bill, which beyond most questions touched the interests of the country gentry, Walpole was their special champion. He carefully humoured their prejudices, and he steadily laboured, sometimes by means that were censurable or unpopular, to reduce the land tax, which was their greatest burden. In 1731 and 1732 it sank for the first time since the Revolution to one shilling in the pound. To abolish it was the main object of his excise scheme. To keep it down he reimposed, in 1732, the salt tax, which had been abolished two years before, and in the following year withdrew 500,000*l.* from the Sinking Fund, which had been provided for the payment of the National Debt.

I have already shown how a similar spirit of caution and conciliation pervaded his religious policy, how he abstained from adopting any course which could arouse the dormant in-

[1] *Walpoliana.*

tolerance of the people, and contented himself by a mild administration of existing laws, by Latitudinarian Church appointments, and, by passing Acts of indemnity, with securing a large amount of practical liberty. He did nothing to relieve the Catholics at home, but his Protestantism, like all his other sentiments, was devoid of fanaticism, and it did not prevent him from co-operating cordially with Cardinal Fleury, who directed affairs in France, from holding frequent unofficial communications with Rome, and from acting with his usual good-nature towards individuals of the creed. The kind alacrity with which he assisted the promotion of an English Catholic priest at Avignon, who was recommended to him by Pope, is said to have given rise to those beautiful lines in which the great Catholic poet has traced his portrait.[1]

A policy such as I have described is not much fitted to strike the imagination, but it was well suited to a period of disputed succession, and to the genius of a nation which has usually preferred cautious to brilliant statesmen, and which owes to this preference no small part of its political well-being. It may be added that there have been very few ministers whose more important judgments have been so uniformly ratified by posterity. The highest English interest of his time was probably the maintenance of the Hanoverian dynasty, and of the constitutional maxims of government it represented; and to Walpole more than to any other single man that maintenance was due. The greatest party blunder made during his time was unquestionably the impeachment of Sacheverell, and the most dangerous constitutional innovation was the Peerage Bill of Stanhope, but Walpole endeavoured privately to prevent the first, and was the chief cause of the rejection of the second. One of the happiest instances of the policy of Chatham was the

[1] 'Seen him I have; but in his happier hour
Of social pleasure ill exchanged for power;
Seen him uncumbered with the venal tribe,
Smile without art, and win without a bribe.
Would he oblige me? Let me only find
He does not think me what he thinks mankind.'
Epilogues to the Satires.

The character will appear very favourable when we remember that Pope was the most intimate friend of Walpole's bitterest enemies. See Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, v. p. 650. Chesterfield's *Miscellaneous Works*, appendix p. 41.

manner in which he allayed the disloyalty of the Scotch, by appealing to their national and military pride, and forming out of their clans national regiments; but a precisely similar policy had been proposed by Duncan Forbes, in 1738, and warmly supported by Walpole, though the opposition of his colleagues, and the outcry that was raised about standing armies, prevented its realisation.[1] The calamities of the next period of English history were mainly due to the disastrous attempt to raise a revenue by the taxation of America; but this plan had, in 1739, been suggested to Walpole, who emphatically rejected it, adding, with admirable wisdom, that it had always been the object of his administration to encourage to the highest point the commercial prosperity of the colonies, that the more that prosperity was augmented, the greater would be the demand for English products, and that it was in this manner that the colonies should be a source of wealth to the mother country.[2] The first slight relaxation of the commercial restraints which excluded the colonies from intercourse with all foreign countries was due to Walpole, who carried, in 1730, an Act enabling Carolina and Georgia to send their rice direct in British vessels, manned by British sailors, to any part of Europe south of Cape Finisterre; and this measure, restricted as it was, had the effect of greatly developing the colonial plantations, and making their produce a successful rival to Egyptian rice, in the chief markets of Europe?[3]

On three occasions Walpole may be said to have been condemned by the almost unanimous voice of the people. He had warned Parliament of some at least of the dangers of the South Sea scheme. His warning was disregarded. The whole nation rushed with a frantic excitement into speculation, and, in the fearful calamities that ensued, Walpole was called in as the one man who could in some degree remedy the evil. His scheme of excise was made the object of absurd and factious misrepresentation. The name of excise was still associated in the popular mind with the hated memory of the Long Parliament, which had borrowed the impost from the Dutch, and had first introduced it into England. The increase in the number

[1] *Culloden Papers*, p. xxxi. [2] *Annual Register*, 1765, p. 25.
[3] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 326–327.

of revenue officers that would be required—which was shown to be utterly insignificant—was represented as likely to give the Crown an overwhelming influence at elections. The scheme, which was limited to two or three articles in which gross frauds in the revenue had been detected, was described as a precursor to a general system of excise—a system, it was added, which could only be maintained by the employment of innumerable spies, who would penetrate into every household, and disturb the peace of every family. Walpole yielded to the clamour, but Pitt, who was one of the bitterest and one of the most honest of his opponents, long afterwards confessed his belief that the scheme was an eminently wise one,[1] and there is now scarcely an historian who does not share the opinion. The chief proximate cause of the downfall of Walpole was his reluctance to enter into that war with Spain which was advocated by all the leaders of the Opposition, and which at last became necessary, from the popular clamour they aroused. Burke, in one of his latest works, took the occasion of expressing his deep sense both of the injustice and the impolicy of this war, and he added that it had been his lot some years after to converse with many of the principal politicians who had raised the clamour that produced it, and that 'none of them, no not one, did in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify their conduct, which they as freely condemned as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history in which they were wholly unconcerned.'[2]

The special field in which the ability of Walpole was most fitted to shine, was undoubtedly finance, and there was probably no exaggeration in the eulogy of a very able contemporary writer,[3] who pronounced him to be 'the best commercial minister this country ever produced.' I have already adverted to the singularly enlightened views he had expressed about the colonial trade, to the prescience with which he warned his countrymen of the calamities that would ensue from the South Sea scheme, and to the almost unanimous verdict of posterity in favour of his excise scheme. I may add that he succeeded in a singularly short time, and at the expense of comparatively slight

[1] See Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 748. [2] *Letter on a Regicide Peace.*
[3] Tucker.

loss to the country, in restoring public credit after the collapse of the South Sea Company; that he was one of the first English statesmen who took efficient measures for the reduction of the National Debt; that he laid the foundation of the free-trade policy of the present century, by abolishing in a single year the duties on 106 articles of export, and on 38 articles of import; that the system of warehousing, or admitting as a temporary deposit, foreign goods, free of duty, to await exportation, which had been largely practised by the Dutch in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and which was one of the happiest measures of Huskisson in the nineteenth century, had been part of the excise scheme of Walpole; that by an alteration in the manner of borrowing by means of Exchequer Bills he saved the country the payment of a large amount of annual interest, and that no single feature of his speeches appeared to his contemporaries so admirable as the unfailing lucidity with which he treated the most intricate questions of finance. In all matters that were not connected with the maintenance of his Parliamentary position he was conspicuously parsimonious of public money, and his fertility of financial resource extorted from George I. the emphatic declaration that 'Walpole could make gold from nothing,' that 'he never had his equal in business.' The establishments were kept low. Credit was fully restored, and under the influence of a sound and pacific policy, and in the absence of meddling commercial laws, the wealth of the country rapidly increased. The abundance of money was so great that even the three-per-cents. were in 1737 at a premium. The average price of land rose in a few years from 20 or 21 to 25, 26 or even 27 years' purchase. The tonnage of British shipping was augmented in the six years that preceded 1729 by no less than 238,000 tons. Particular taxes were appropriated to the payment of the interest of the debt, and it was provided that when they were more than sufficient for the purpose, the surplus was to be paid into a sinking fund for the liquidation of the principal. Partly by the increase of the produce of these taxes, and partly by reductions of the interest of the debt, the sum annually paid into this sinking fund for some years rapidly increased. In 1717 it amounted to 323,427*l.*, in 1724 to 653,000*l.*, in 1738 to 1,231,127*l.* The value of the imports rose between 1708 and 1730 from

4,698,663*l.* to 7,780,019*l.*, that of the exports from 6,969,089*l.* to 11,974,135*l.* A corresponding progress was shown in the growth of the manufacturing towns, in the extension of almost every prominent form of industry, in the improved condition of the poorer classes of the community. The price of wheat in the first half of the eighteenth century steadily fell. During the fifty years that preceded 1700 the average price per quarter was 3*l.* 11*s.* During the forty years that preceded 1750 it had sunk to 1*l.* 16*s.*, but at the same time the price of labour underwent no corresponding diminution, and during the latter part of that time it had considerably risen.[1]

The merits of Walpole in this respect were very great, for in the eyes of most impartial observers there was much in the financial condition of the country since the Revolution that was extremely serious. The expenses of the administration had increased, and the National Debt, which at the time of the Revolution was only 648,000*l.*, amounted on the death of William to more than sixteen millions, and on the accession of George I. to more than fifty-four millions. Accustomed as we are to the far more gigantic burden of our present debt, it is perhaps difficult for us to estimate the consternation with which this phenomenon was regarded, and the National Debt is historically so closely connected with the Revolution that Whig historians have shown a strong tendency to depreciate its importance. They have urged with truth that the existence of some debt was inevitable, that Italy, Holland, France, and Spain had already taken considerable steps in the same direction, that the increased perfection of military organisation, by adding largely to the cost of war, had made it eminently advisable to spread the expense of a great struggle over several years of peace, that in 1692, when the funded system began, it would have been impossible to have raised the war taxes within the year without seriously crippling industry and shaking the Government, and that, on the other hand, the abundance of money seeking investment made a loan peculiarly advisable. They

[1] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. pp. 147, 148. Malthus, *On Population*, book iii. c. x. Chalmers' *Estimate* (ed. 1794), pp. 107, 108. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 201–203 Hallam's *Const. Hist.* iii. p. 302. Coxe's *Walpole*, c. xlvii. Mill's *Hist. of British India*, bk. iv. c. i. Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue.*

have added, too, that the evils of a national debt have been greatly exaggerated, and that its advantages are by no means inconsiderable. It is certain, notwithstanding the prognostications of innumerable economists, that the material prosperity of England has steadily advanced in spite of its debt. It is certain that although a debt which a nation owes to itself is economically an evil, it is an evil of a very different magnitude from a debt owed to a foreign nation. There is also a real and a considerable advantage in the possession of a secure and easy mode of investing money accessible to all classes, universally known, and furnishing the utmost facilities for transfer. Nor should it be forgotten that a financial system which gives a large proportion of the people a direct pecuniary interest in the stability of the Government is a great pledge of order and a firm bond of national cohesion.

But, admitting these arguments, the evils of national debts, both moral and economical, are very serious. Economically they almost invariably imply an enormous waste of capital with a proportionate injury to the working classes. The principal of the debt is usually spent unproductively by the Government as revenue, and it is drawn in a large part from capital which would have been otherwise productively employed and which forms part of the wage fund of the nation. It is a transparent though common fallacy to suppose that it reproduces itself in interest. A moment's reflection is sufficient to show that, except in the rare cases in which the borrowed money is employed in some reproductive work, no such interest accrues, and that the annual sum which the Government engages to pay to its creditors is derived from other sources, from a general taxation levied on funds part of which, at least, would otherwise have been productively employed. And the economical evil of this dissipation of capital is greatly aggravated by moral causes. Many forms of lavish unproductive expenditure, and especially the splendours and the excitements of war, are naturally so popular that any minister or sovereign whose position is insecure or whose character is ambitious is almost irresistibly tempted to resort to them if there is no strong counteracting influence. The natural restraint upon these extravagances is the necessity of raising by taxation the whole sum that is required. The sacrifice and disturbance caused by such an increase of taxation arouse a feeling

which at once checks the progress of the evil. But by the funding system this invaluable restraint is almost wholly removed. The money that is required is borrowed. The increase of taxation that is necessary to pay the mere interest appears trifling and almost imperceptible. The process which should be resorted to, only in extreme emergencies of the State, is found so easy and popular that it is constantly repeated. The nation, losing all habit of financial sacrifice, borrows in every moment of difficulty, contents itself in time of prosperity with simply paying the interest of the debt, and makes no serious effort to reduce the principal. Thus by stealthy and insidious steps the evil creeps on till the national prosperity and industry are heavily mortgaged, and the consequences of the crimes and blunders of one generation are entailed upon the remotest posterity. In ancient times, the traces of the most horrible war were soon effaced. In a few years the misery and desolation that followed it were forgotten. The waste of national wealth which might appear a more permanent calamity was so immediately and acutely felt that it at once produced an increase of energy and self-sacrifice to replace it, and thus the effects of political errors usually disappeared almost with those who perpetrated them. In modern times the chief expenditure of a war is raised by a loan, which is often drawn from the capital that would otherwise have given employment to the poor, which rarely or never produces in the community any considerable increase of economy, and which always perpetuates the calamity of war by throwing its accumulated burdens upon a distant posterity. Every English household is now suffering from the American policy of North and the French policy of Pitt, and the political errors of the Second Empire will be felt by Frenchmen as a present evil long after the children and grandchildren of those who perpetrated them are in their graves.

Nor is it true that the sinister predictions of such economists as Hume and Adam Smith, though they have been falsified by the result, rested upon any fundamental error of principle. If the National Debt before the American War did not arrest, though it undoubtedly retarded, the material progress of England, this was merely because the resources of the country were so large

and its circumstances and situation so favourable that the normal increase of wealth was considerably greater than the increase of the burden. If the debts that were contracted during the great American and French Wars did not ruin the country it was owing to a series of events which no human sagacity could have predicted. The great mechanical inventions of Hargreaves, Arkwright, Crompton, Watt, and Stephenson, followed by a peace of almost unexampled duration, and by a policy of free trade, have produced an increase of wealth that is wholly unparalleled in the history of mankind; while Californian and Australian gold, by depreciating the value of money, have considerably lightened the burden of the debt, at the cost of great loss and injury to the fundholder. It remains, however, as true as ever that European nations have never in time of peace paid off their debts with a rapidity at all corresponding to that with which they accumulated them in time of war; that the increased taxation necessitated by national debts has led, and may easily lead, to national bankruptcy; and that long before it reaches this point, it produces distress, difficulty, and privation, and seriously endangers the security of the State. It is one of the worst features of national debts that they deprive nations of the power of regulating their expenditure by their resources. A permanent taxation, which may be easily borne in time of great commercial prosperity, may become crushing if the course of commerce takes another channel, and if the income of the nation is proportionately reduced. History shows how easily this may happen. A war, a new invention, the exhaustion of some essential element of national industry, the progress of a rival, or a change in the value or conditions of labour, may speedily turn the stream of wealth, while the burden of debt remains. And, indeed, this burden itself is one of the most likely causes of such a change. When other things are equal, the least indebted nation will always have the advantage in industrial competition; for the heavy taxation necessitated by debts at once raises prices and reduces profits, and thus causes the emigration both of capital and labour.

These considerations may serve in some degree to justify the great dread with which the National Debt was regarded by the wisest political observers in the eighteenth century. Their

judgments were not formed merely by theory. France actually proclaimed herself bankrupt in 1715 and 1769. Holland had already entered into a period of commercial decadence, which was largely due to the emigration of capital resulting from the excessive taxation rendered necessary by her debt. The whole sum raised by taxation in England at the time of the Revolution but slightly exceeded two millions, and it was raised with difficulty, and in the hard years that followed that event the produce of the taxes considerably diminished.[1] It is not surprising, therefore, that the growth of the debt should have appeared bewildering in its rapidity, and that very erroneous estimates should have been formed of the capabilities of the nation. Thus Davenant, the chief commercial writer under William and Anne, predicted in 1699 that England could never flourish in trade and manufactures till the greater part of the National Debt was liquidated, and the annual taxation of the country reduced to about 2,300,000*l.* 'Unless this can be compassed,' he added, 'we shall languish and decay every year. Our gold and silver will be carried off by degrees; rents will fall, the purchase of land will decrease; wool will sink in its price; our stock of shipping will be diminished; farmhouses will go to ruin; industry will decay, and we shall have upon us all the visible marks of a declining people.'[2] These figures, however, were speedily passed. Carteret complained bitterly in 1738 that the estimates had now risen to no less than six millions.[3] Smollett considered the sum of ten millions which was raised in 1743 'enormous.'[4] Bolingbroke noted that the Parliamentary aids from the year 1740 exclusively, to the year 1748 inclusively, amounted to about 55½ millions, 'a sum,' he added, 'that will appear incredible to future generations.'[5] The most acute observers imagined that the nation had now all but touched the extreme limits of her resources. As early as 1735 Lord Hervey wrote, 'I do not see how it would be possible on any exigence, or for the support of the most necessary war, for England to raise above one million a year more than it now raises.'[6] 'The Craftsman,'

[1] See Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 406–407.
[2] Davenant's *Works* (1771), ii. 283.
[3] Smollett's *Hist. of England*, iii. 11.
[4] *Hist. of England*, iii. 120.
[5] *Reflections on the Present State of the Nation.*
[6] Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 487.

the great organ of Bolingbroke and Pulteney, describing the condition of the country in 1736, says, 'The vast load of debt under which the nation still groans is the true source of all these calamities and gloomy prospects of which we have so much reason to complain. To this has been owing that multiplicity of burthensome taxes which have more than doubled the price of the common necessaries of life within a few years past, and thereby distressed the poor labourer and manufacturer, disabled the farmer to pay his rent, and put even gentlemen of plentiful estates under the greatest difficulties to make a tolerable provision for their families.'[1] Walpole himself declared that the country could not stand under a debt exceeding a hundred millions.[2] Hume maintained that the ruinous effect of the debt already threatened the very existence of the nation,[3] and Chesterfield, only a few months before the great ministry of Pitt, predicted that in the next year the army must be unpaid or reduced, as it would be impossible for the country a second time to raise twelve millions.[4]

By far the larger part of the existing National Debt was created by Tory Governments, and in pursuance of a Tory policy. In the time of Walpole, however, the debt was looked upon as distinctively Whig, the special creation of the Revolution. And this view, though not rigidly accurate, contained a very large measure of truth. The events of the Revolution drew England into a series of great land wars upon the Continent, which made an unprecedented military expenditure inevitable, while the position of the new Government was so insecure that it did not venture largely to increase taxation. The land tax, which was by far the most important addition made to the revenue under William III., was in a great degree merely a compensation for the abolition of the hearth tax. Besides this, the insecurity of the new establishment raised enormously the rate of interest on Government loans.[5] It rendered necessary a considerable standing army in time of peace, and it was a

[1] No. 502.

[2] Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, vol. i. p. 103.

[3] *Hist. of England*, c. xxi. See, too, his essay on *Public Credit*, and the curious note appended to it.

[4] June 1756. *Miscellaneous Works*, iv. 185.

[5] For the extravagant terms on which loans were raised under William, see Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 417–421.

temptation to Whig Governments to strengthen their position by multiplying a class of persons who were bound to the new dynasty by pecuniary ties. In the reigns of William and of Anne, money was chiefly raised by anticipating the produce of certain taxes for a limited number of years, by annuities granted on very extravagant conditions for a term of years or for lives, and also, from the great mercantile corporations in return for commercial privileges. After the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty most loans took the form of perpetual annuities. The attempts which were made to diminish the burden of the debt consisted chiefly in the reduction of its interest. This policy appears to have been first pursued in Holland. The Dutch debt bore interest of five per cent., and when in 1655 it was found possible for the State to obtain money at four per cent. the creditors were offered the alternative of the reduction of the interest or the payment of the principal. The former was readily accepted. An annual saving of 1,400,000 guilders was thus made, and it was applied to the gradual payment of the principal of the debt.[1] In 1685 Pope Innocent XI., in a similar manner, reduced the interest on the Roman debt from four to three per cent.[2] I have already noticed the arrangement which Godolphin made with the East India Company in 1708 for the reduction of the interest upon a large sum which the Government had borrowed from that company; but no general scheme for the reduction of the interest of the debt was devised before that which was originated by Walpole in 1716, and carried out by Stanhope in the following year. For some time the increase of prosperity had greatly lowered the normal rate of interest. Under William the Government had borrowed money at seven and eight per cent. Under Anne it usually borrowed at five or six, and in 1714 the legal rate of interest was reduced to five per cent., though the Government funds still paid a much higher rate. Under these circumstances it was found practicable to reduce the interest of the debt to five per cent., the Bank and the South Sea Company, which were the chief creditors, not only consenting to the reduction, but also lending money to pay off the creditors who refused to acquiesce. Particular taxes had been appropriated for the payment of the interest, and as they now yielded more than was sufficient, the

[1] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 463. [2] Ibid. p. 622.

surplus was formed into a sinking fund accumulating for the payment of the principal of the debt.[1]

In this manner a very considerable saving was made, and a step taken which was more than once repeated. The payment of the debt, however, was not pursued with any energy by Walpole. A second reduction of interest took place in 1727, and it greatly increased the sinking fund, but that sinking fund was at the disposal of the Government, and the temptation of drawing from it in every season of emergency was irresistible. It is not necessary to attribute any very high motives to Walpole in this matter, but he would probably have maintained that in the condition in which England then was, it was more important to make the people contented, and to reconcile the country gentry to the new dynasty, than to pay off the debt. Certain it is that he made the reduction of the land tax rather than the payment of the debt the end of his policy. For a few years the sinking fund was applied to the purpose for which it was intended, but in 1733 500,000*l.* were taken from it for the services of the year; in 1734 1,200,000*l.* were taken for similar purposes, and in 1735 it was all anticipated. But though no great credit can in this respect be given to Walpole, his Government was at least an economical one, and the care with which he husbanded the resources of the country, and the skill with which he developed its commerce, broke the chain of associations which connected the Whig party with a policy of debt and of extravagance.

Still more remarkable, when we consider the period in which he lived, was his deference to public opinion. Parliament was at this time no faithful representative of the public feeling, and in Parliament he was supreme. But no Court favour, no confidence in an obsequious majority, ever induced him, except in a single case to which I shall hereafter advert, to fall into that neglect of unrepresented public opinion which has been the fatal error of so many politicians and the parent of so many revolutions. In few periods of English history have libels against the Government been more virulent or more able; but, from policy or temperament, or both, Walpole treated them, for the most part, with perfect indifference. 'No Government,' he boasted in one of his speeches, 'ever punished so few libels, and

[1] See Macpherson, Chalmers, and Sinclair.

no Government ever had provocation to punish so many.' In the last reign Parliament and the tribunals had vied with each other in their persecution of the press. Defoe, Steele, Drake, Binckes, Tutchin, Sacheverell, Asgill, and a crowd of obscure printers had been fined, imprisoned, pilloried, censured, or expelled from Parliament. But under Walpole the system of repression almost ceased, and if the extreme violence and scurrility of the stage, and the success with which Gay and Fielding employed it against his administration, induced him, in 1737, to carry a law providing that no play could be publicly acted without the licence of the Chamberlain, this measure can hardly be regarded as one of excessive severity, as it remains in force to the present day. As a minister, Walpole combined an extreme and exaggerated severity of party discipline within Parliament, with the utmost deference for the public opinion beyond its walls. In his party he aspired to and attained the position of sole minister. He gradually displaced every man of eminence and character who could become his rival, avoided as much as possible calling cabinet councils, lest they should furnish the elements of an opposition, and usually matured his measures around a dinner-table with two or three colleagues who were specially conversant with the matter in question; sometimes, when the project was one of law reform, with lawyers of the Opposition.[1] Important despatches were received and answered without being communicated to his colleagues, and if they ventured to resist his decisions he treated them with the utmost despotism. 'Sir Robert,' said the old Duchess of Marlborough, with her usual shrewdness, 'never likes any but fools and such as have lost all credit.' Lord Hardwicke and Mr. Pelham were constantly employed in composing the quarrels which arose from the slights he continually inflicted on the Duke of Newcastle; and the strength of the Opposition that overwhelmed him was mainly due to the number of men of talent whom he had discarded. When the excise scheme was abandoned he peremptorily dismissed Lord Chesterfield, the Duke of Montrose, Lord Marchmont, and Lord Clinton, who had revolted against his standard, and, by an extreme and unjustifiable stretch of authority, even deprived the

[1] See Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. p. 110.

Duke of Bolton and Lord Cobham of their military rank. But the minister who was so imperious in his dealings with his colleagues or subordinates rarely failed to mark and obey the first indication of a public opinion that was hostile to his projects. His withdrawal of Wood's halfpence, when they had excited the opposition of the Irish people, the uniform moderation of his religious policy, his abandonment of his project of excise, are all examples of his constant respect for the wishes of the people. Few ministers have had greater facilities for carrying out a favourite line of policy in defiance of their wishes. No minister more steadily resisted the temptation. His conduct on the excise question, as it is related by an old Member of Parliament who enjoyed his intimate friendship, is typical of his whole career. He possessed in a full degree the pride and parental affection of a statesman for the great measure of his creation, and he was keenly sensible of the humiliation of abandoning it at the dictation of an Opposition. No one knew better how irrational was the popular clamour, or how factious were the motives of those who instigated it. The Bill passed by large majorities through its earlier stages, but the minister saw that the country was deeply moved; and the evening before the final stage was reached he summoned his adherents, who had so far borne him in triumph, and he consulted with them on the course he should pursue. Without a single dissentient voice they urged him to persevere, and pledged themselves to carry the Bill. Walpole remained silent till they had all spoken, when he rose, and having stated how conscious he was of having meant well, he proceeded to say that 'in the present inflamed temper of the people the Act could not be carried into execution without an armed force; that there would be an end to the liberty of England if supplies were to be raised by the sword. If, therefore, the resolution was to go on with the Bill, he would immediately wait upon the King, and desire His Majesty's permission to resign his office, for he would not be the minister to enforce taxes at the expense of blood.'[1]

[1] Almon's *Anecdotes of Chatham*, ii. 106. Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 403–404. The authority for this anecdote is Mr. White, the Member for Retford, who was an intimate friend of Walpole; it is itself quite in harmony with what we know of the character of Walpole, and Archdeacon Coxe fully

English political history contains many more dazzling episodes than this. It contains very few which a constitutional statesman will regard as more worthy of his admiration.

A kindred spirit of moderation, in the later years of his life, marked his dealings with his opponents, though in this respect his merits have, I think, been much exaggerated. Among the benefits achieved by the Revolution, one of the greatest was that reform of the law of treason which placed the political opponents of the Government under efficient legal guarantees, put an end to the intolerable scandal of the Stuart State trials, and introduced a new spirit of clemency and amenity into English politics. The change was, however, only very gradually effected. The Treason Act of 1696 did not extend to the case of those who were impeached by the House of Commons, and the unhappy noblemen who suffered for the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 were compelled to defend their lives almost without legal assistance. The counsel assigned to them were not allowed to cross-examine any witness, to give the prisoner any assistance, public or private, while matter of fact only was in question, or to hold any communication with him; though if a disputed question of law arose in the course of the trial, they might speak to it. A miserable scene took place, after the former rebellion, at the trial of Lord Wintoun. He is said to have been, at best, a man of very weak intellect, and he was evidently utterly bewildered by the scene and situation in which he found himself, and utterly incapable of conducting his defence. Again and again he implored the Lord High Steward to allow counsel to examine the witnesses, and to speak in his behalf. He professed himself, with truth, entirely incapable of conducting a cross-examination, or of presenting his defence; but he was again and again told that the law refused him the legal assistance he so imperatively required.[1] Hardly less scandalous was the scene exhibited thirty years later, when Lord Lovat, an old man of eighty, almost ignorant of the very rudiments of the law, and with the grotesque manners of a half-savage Highlander, was compelled, without assistance, to defend his life against

admits it. At the same time it must be acknowledged that it is not easy to find a place for the transaction in the history of the Excise Bill as narrated in Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*.

[1] Townsend's *Hist. of the House of Commons*, ii. 286–293.

an array of the most skilful lawyers in England. The injustice was so glaring that it at last shocked the public conscience, and a measure was moved and carried, without opposition, in 1747, for allowing the same privileges of counsel to prisoners in cases of impeachment as in cases of indictment.[1] For many years after the Revolution, parliamentary impeachment was looked upon as an ordinary weapon of political warfare, and the Whig party, though far less guilty than their opponents, are responsible for a few scandalous instances of tyrannical severity. The execution of Sir John Fenwick, by a Bill of Attainder, at a time when there was no sufficient legal evidence to procure his condemnation, has left a deep stain upon the Government of William. The imprisonment without trial of Bernardi and four other conspirators, who were concerned in the plot against the life of William in 1696, was continued by special Acts of Parliament to the end of the reign of William and through the whole of the reign of Anne. In the first year of George I. a petition for their release was presented to the House of Lords; but the Whig Government persuaded the House to refuse even to take it into consideration. It was rejected without a division, Lord Townshend expressing his astonishment that any member of that august assembly should speak in favour of such execrable wretches;[2] and Bernardi at last died, in 1736, at the age of eighty, having been imprisoned, without condemnation, for no less than forty years, by the Acts of six successive Parliaments.[3] Walpole himself was a leading agent in the impeachment of the Tory ministers of Anne for the negotiation of a peace which had received the assent of two Parliaments; and Oxford remained for two years in the Tower before his trial and acquittal. The severities of the Government against the prisoners who were implicated in the rebellion of 1715 are susceptible of more defence, but it is at least certain that the ministers by no means erred on the side of clemency; and it is worthy of notice that Walpole on this occasion uniformly advocated severity, and even induced Parliament to adjourn between the condemnation and execution

[1] 20 George ii. c. 30. Horace Walpole to Mason, May 1747.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* vii. 61–62.

[3] Bernardi's *Autobiography*. Townshend's *Hist. of the House of Commons*, ii. 205–206. Johnson has made a touching allusion to this case in his *Life of Pope*.

of the rebel lords, in order to render useless, petitions for their reprieve.[1] But whatever may have been his conduct at this time, in the later part of his career he displayed a uniform generosity to opponents, even when he knew them to be implicated in Jacobite conspiracies, and when they were therefore in a great degree in his power. He made it a great aim to banish violence from English politics, and an illustrious modern critic, who was far from favourable to him, has said that 'he was the minister who gave to our Government the character of lenity, which it has generally preserved.'[2]

To these merits we must add his ardent love of peace, and the skill with which, during many years and under circumstances of great difficulty, he succeeded in preserving it. He served two sovereigns, the first of whom cared nothing, and the second very little, for any but Continental politics; and George II. was passionately warlike, and anxious beyond all things to distinguish himself in the field. He was at the head of a party which by tradition and principle was extremely warlike, which originally represented the reaction against the arrogant ambition of Lewis XIV. and the abject servility of Charles II., and which under William and Anne had aspired to make England the arbiter of Europe. He was embarrassed also during a great part of his career by an Opposition which never scrupled for party purposes to aggravate the difficulties of foreign policy; and the whole Continent was troubled by the restless plotting of ambitious and perfectly unscrupulous rulers. In the last years of George I. Europe was again on the verge of a general conflagration. When peace had been established between France and Spain in 1720 the Infanta, who was then only four years old, was betrothed to Lewis XV., and she was brought to France to be educated as a Frenchwoman. By thus postponing for many years the marriage of the young king, the Regent greatly strengthened the probability of his own succession to the throne; but on the death of the Regent in December 1723, the Duke of Bourbon, who succeeded to power, determined to hasten the royal marriage. He accordingly broke off the Spanish alliance, sent the Infanta back to Spain, and negotiated an almost immediate marriage be-

[1] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 72–73. [2] Macaulay.

tween the French king and the daughter of Stanislaus, the deposed King of Poland. The affront thus offered to the Spanish court, together with the influence of Ripperda, the Dutch adventurer, who now directed Spanish policy, produced or at least accelerated, a great change in the aspect of European politics. The Emperor and the King of Spain, whose rivalry had so long distracted Europe, now gravitated to one another, and a close alliance was concluded between them in April 1725.[1] The Spanish Government agreed to recognise the Pragmatic Sanction, which provided that the Austrian succession should descend to the daughter of Charles VI., and it ceded almost every point that was at issue between the Courts. Each Power agreed to recognise the right of succession of the other, and to defend the other in case of attack; and Spain gratified the maritime ambition which was one of the strongest passions of the Emperor, by recognising the Ostend Company, by placing Austrian sailors in her seaports on the footing of the most favoured nation, and by promising them special protection in all her dominions.

Of all mercantile bodies the Ostend Company was the most offensive to England and Holland. Founded soon after the cession of the Spanish Netherlands to Austria, it was intended among other objects to establish a trade by the subjects of the Emperor with India, and thus to break down the monopoly which the India companies of England and Holland had established.[2] Two ships had sailed from Ostend, in 1717, under the passports of the Emperor, and several others soon followed their example. The Dutch seized some of the Ostend ships as violating their monopoly. The Emperor retaliated by granting commissions of reprisal. Laws were passed in England in 1721 and 1723 strengthening the English monopoly, and authorising the English to fine any foreigners who were found infringing it, triple the sum that was embarked; but the Emperor, in 1723, gave a regular charter to the Ostend Company, and in defiance of the Dutch and English Governments it rose rapidly into prominence. Its recognition by Spain was therefore a matter of very considerable political moment. It soon, however, became known among statesmen that other objects were de-

[1] See, on this treaty, Ranke's *Hist. of Prussia*, i. 190–192.
[2] Mill's *Hist. of India*, bk. iv. c. 1.

signed—that Austria engaged to assist Spain in wresting Gibraltar and Minorca from England; that there was a project, by a marriage between Maria Theresa and Don Carlos, the eldest son of Philip's second wife, of placing the Imperial sceptre in the hands of a Spanish prince, and making Austria supreme in Italy by joining Parma, Piacenza, and Tuscany, which were assured to Don Carlos, to Naples and Sicily, which already belonged to Austria; that Charles VI., partly from religious fanaticism, and partly from personal resentment, was boasting of his intention to drive the Protestant line from the English throne. Russia, after the death of Peter, was governed by Catherine, who, being still irritated with England on account of the policy of Hanover, and especially anxious to obtain Sleswig for her son-in-law, the Duke of Holstein, favoured, and soon joined, the new alliance. The King and Townshend, contrary to the first wishes of Walpole, concluded a rival confederation of England, France, and Prussia,[1] at Hanover, in September 1725; but in the following year Prussia, which had acceded to the alliance only on the condition of England recognising her claims to Juliers and Berg, changed sides. Holland, Sweden, and Denmark were afterwards ranged with England, and as the probabilities of war became more imminent, an army of about 44,000 Swedes, Danes, and Hessians was subsidised. England and France both contributed to the expense, but 12,000 Hessians were taken into the exclusive pay of England. Nearly all Europe was preparing for war. George I., as Elector of Hanover, increased his troops from 16,000 to 22,000 men, and as King of England from 18,000 to 26,000. The Spaniards, relying on the conditional promise which George I. had vainly made as an inducement to Spain to abstain from hostilities in 1715, and on the letter which he had written to the King of Spain in 1721, expressing his willingness to restore Gibraltar with the consent of Parliament, demanded the restitution of that fortress. Lord Townshend valued it little more than Stanhope[2] had done, but public opinion in England would make any attempt

[1] See, on Walpole's strong objection to the Treaty of Hanover, Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 110-111. This is said to have been the beginning of the difference between Walpole and Townshend, and the first occasion in which the former meddled very actively with foreign affairs.

[2] In a letter to Stephen Poyntz (June 3, 1728) he said: 'What you propose in

at concession wholly impossible, and in February 1726-27 the Spaniards began hostilities by besieging Gibraltar. The Emperor prepared to invade Holland. The Russian forces, by sea and land, were rapidly organised. France massed her troops on the frontiers of Germany. An English squadron had already sailed to the Baltic. Another threatened the Spanish coast, while a third prevented the departure of the Spanish galleons from the Indies.

The Treaty of Hanover was for more than a generation bitterly assailed in England. Its justification rests upon the reality of the secret articles of the Treaty of Vienna, and although the evidence in the possession of the Government appears to have been very sufficient,[1] it was not of a kind that could be publicly produced. The existence of these articles was announced in the King's speech in January 1726-27,[2] but it was officially, and in very angry terms, denied by the Austrian minister. In England the Treaty of Hanover was denounced as intended only to protect the German dominions of the King, as strengthening, by our alliance, the Power on the Continent we had most reason to fear, as placing us unnecessarily in hostility to the Emperor, who was the main obstacle to French ambition. It was, however, a defensive measure elicited by a grave danger, and it was inevitable that a war with the Emperor should centre chiefly in Germany. Walpole disapproved of some of its provisions, and especially of the extravagance of the subsidy to Sweden, and he made it a main object of his policy to moderate the demands of his colleagues and of the King, and to delay, restrict, and if possible avert, the war. His conduct, however, during the tangled events that followed was not, I think, marked by much sagacity, and in his dealings with Spain, at least, he showed a want of resolution that verged

relation to Gibraltar is certainly very reasonable, and is exactly conformable to the opinion which you know I have always entertained concerning that place. But you cannot but be sensible of the violent and almost superstitious zeal which has of late prevailed among all parties in this kingdom against any scheme for the restitution of Gibraltar upon any conditions whatsoever. And I am afraid that the bare mention of a proposal which carried the most distant appearance of laying England under any obligation of ever parting with that place would be sufficient to put the whole nation in a flame.'—Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 631.

[1] See the intercepted letters given in Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. p. 498-515, and the full account of the secret articles afterwards given by Ripperda himself. Benjamin Keene to the Duke of Newcastle. Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 606-607.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* viii. 524.

upon pusillanimity. He refused with much wisdom to listen to a plan of Townshend for the conquest and partition of the Austrian Netherlands, or to allow himself to be hurried into hostilities by the very arrogant terms of a memorial in which the Austrian ambassador contradicted the assertions of the King's speech relating to the secret articles of the treaty of 1725. He sent Admiral Hosier to the West Indies to blockade the Spanish galleons in Porto Bello, though peace was still subsisting between the two countries, but he bound him by strict instructions not to attack the Spaniards unless they came out. The history of this expedition was a very tragic one. A prize of inestimable value lay within the grasp of the English sailors, who were forbidden to seize it, while the deadly fever of the country swept them away by hundreds. The fleet rotted in inaction, and the admiral is said to have died of a broken heart. His fate, commemorated in a noble ballad by Glover, afterwards moved the English people to the highest point of pity and indignation, and the subsequent conduct of Walpole in refraining from declaring war against the Spaniards when they attacked Gibraltar was very reasonably censured. His object was to prevent, if possible, a European war, and that object was accomplished. Ripperda, who had contributed so largely to the complication, had been disgraced as early as May 1726. A month later the Duke of Bourbon was replaced by Cardinal Fleury, and that eminently wise, virtuous, and pacific minister, during many years, co-operated cordially with the peace policy of Walpole. In the May of the following year the death of the Czarina withdrew Russia from the hostile league. The Emperor, finding perplexities and difficulties multiplying about him, receded from his engagements, left the Spanish forces to waste away in a hopeless enterprise against Gibraltar, and on the last day of May 1727 he signed the preliminaries of a peace with England, France, and Holland. An armistice was concluded, and the Ostend Company suspended for seven years, with the secret understanding that it was not to be revived; the chief questions at issue were referred to a future congress, and a war which threatened to be general shrank into the smallest dimensions. The Spanish position seemed hopeless, and the Spanish ambassador at Vienna accepted the preliminaries of peace, and engaged that the siege of Gibraltar should at once

be raised, and that a ship belonging to the South Sea Company which the Spaniards had captured should be restored.

Philip, however, for a time refused to ratify these preliminaries. George I. died suddenly in Germany on June 11, 1727, and some expectations appear to have been entertained at the Spanish Court of a Jacobite restoration, of a period of disturbance and impotence, or at least of a great change in English policy, arising from the violent hostility of the new King to the ministers of his father. But these expectations were disappointed. After a few days of suspense, Walpole was fully confirmed in his previous power, and the substitution of a king who at least knew the language of his country, for one who never ceased to be a complete foreigner, somewhat strengthened the new establishment without perceptibly altering its policy. The refusal of Philip, however, to ratify the preliminaries threatened a renewal of danger; the Emperor showed some signs of fresh activity, and, as a measure of precaution, a new German treaty was made in November, securing the assistance of the Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, in the event of an attack upon Hanover. At last, in March 1728, the long negotiation was brought a stage further by the signature of a convention at the Pardo; a congress was held at Soissons, which led to no definite results; but, by the combined influence of Fleury and Walpole, a treaty was concluded at Seville in March 1729, by which the Spanish Queen succeeded in avenging herself for the desertion of the Emperor and taking a new step towards the attainment of one of the favourite objects of her life. To secure the succession of her son in Tuscany and Parma, it was agreed that those provinces should be at once garrisoned, not, as the Quadruple Alliance had promised, by neutral troops, but by 6,000 Spanish soldiers. Gibraltar was not mentioned in the treaty, and this silence was regarded as a renunciation of the claims of Spain. The commercial privileges conceded to the Emperor by the Treaty of Vienna, which had been so obnoxious to England, were revoked. The commerce of the English and French with the Spanish dominions was re-established on the same footing as before 1725, injuries done to English ships or interests were to be compensated, and a close defensive alliance was established between France, Spain, and England.

The Treaty of Seville has been justly regarded as one of the great triumphs of French diplomacy. It closed the breach which had long divided the courts of France and of Spain, and at the same time it detached both England and Spain from the Emperor, and left him isolated in Europe. He resented it bitterly, protested against the introduction of Spanish troops into Italy as a violation of the Quadruple Alliance, threatened to resist it by force, and delayed the execution of this part of the treaty during the whole of 1730. In the meantime the condition of Europe had become very dangerous. Spain was much exasperated at the delay, and there was much danger that England would find herself forced, in conjunction with France and Spain, into a war which would most probably ultimately extend to the Austrian Netherlands, and might result in acquisitions by France very dangerous to England. The resignation of Townshend had by this time made Walpole more prominent in foreign affairs, and he opened a secret negotiation with the Emperor in order to avert war. England undertook to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, by which the Emperor was endeavouring to secure for his daughter the inheritance of his hereditary dominions, and on this condition he consented to the admission of the Spanish troops. The new Treaty of Vienna was signed without the participation or assent of France, in March 1731; the danger of a European war was again for a time averted, and on October 17, a fleet of sixteen British men-of-war escorted the Spanish troops to Italy.

The policy of England during all these tortuous negotiations was not always wise, consistent, or even strictly honourable, but its first object was the maintenance of European peace, and it shows how widely the Whig party under Walpole had in this respect departed from the traditions of William III. and of Godolphin. In the next war his firm will alone prevented England from being involved. In February 1732-33 Augustus II., King of Poland, died, and the succession was at once contested between Stanislaus and Augustus, the Elector of Saxony. The first, who had previously been placed on the Polish throne by Charles XII., but dethroned by the Russians, was now elected by the Poles; and, as he was the father of the young Queen of France, Fleury was compelled very reluctantly, by the military party

at Court, to support his claims by the sword. His competitor, who was the son of the former king, was supported by Russia, which regarded Stanislaus as a natural enemy, and he succeeded in inducing the Emperor Charles VI. to enter very gratuitously into the conflict, partly through a desire to prevent what was supposed to be an extension of French influence, and partly because Augustus offered to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction. The war lasted till 1735,[1] but it speedily changed its character and its objects. The Polish episode sank into comparative insignificance, and the French carried their arms with brilliant success into Germany and into the Austrian territories of Italy. Spain and Sardinia joined against the Emperor. The 6,000 Spanish soldiers whom England had so recently escorted into Italy, marched in conjunction with Sardinian troops and with a body of French auxiliaries, upon the Milanese, and the result of the war was a very considerable modification of the balance of power. With the exception of the Duchies of Parma and Placentia, which were now ceded, and of a portion of the Milanese which was restored, to Austria, the Emperor lost all territory in Italy. Naples and Sicily passed to Don Carlos, and the greater part of the Milanese to the King of Sardinia. The Poles, finding themselves almost deserted by France and incapable of resisting Russia, elected Augustus, while Stanislaus was compensated in a way which greatly surprised Europe, and had a very important influence upon future policy. For several generations one of the great ends of French ambition had been the acquisition of Lorraine, which commanded one of the chief roads from Germany to France. Twice already—in the Thirty Years' War and in the War of the League of Augsburg—it had passed under French dominion, but in each case France had been compelled to restore it at the peace, though she retained a moral control over its Duke which almost amounted to sovereignty. In Italy the last of the Medici was now hastening to the tomb, and Fleury proposed that the Duke of Lorraine, who was affianced to Maria Theresa, and thus closely connected with the Austrian interest, should succeed to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; that Stanislaus, retaining the title of king, should

[1] The preliminaries of peace were signed in 1735, but the definitive peace in 1738.

obtain possession of the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar; and that on his death those Duchies should be for ever united to France. In consideration of this arrangement, France agreed to restore her conquests in Germany, and to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction. The terms were accepted, and thus France, under the guidance of one of the most pacific of her ministers, obtained a more real and considerable accession of power than any which had been gained by the ambition of Lewis XIV.

It was only with extreme difficulty that Walpole could induce England to remain passive during the struggle. The King was vehemently hostile to the French. As a German prince and a member of the Empire, he saw with the utmost indignation the diminution of the Imperial power, and he was full of a boyish eagerness to distinguish himself in the field. It was no slight trial for the Power which was indisputably the mistress of the sea to see a French fleet sailing unmolested to the Baltic to support the cause of Stanislaus in the north, and a Spanish fleet in the following year transporting 20,000 men to Italy to add Sicily and Spain to the dominions of the House of Bourbon. The Cabinet was divided in opinion. Statesmen had learnt that the advocacy of war was the easiest way to the royal favour, and the Opposition Members were busy inflaming the passions of the people. In spite of the French alliance, which had been begun by Dubois and continued by Fleury, the sentiment of England was strongly anti-Gallican, and there were plausible arguments for intervention. The greatest danger to England lay in the power of France, and that power for several generations had been rapidly increasing. The sagacious administration of Richelieu and Mazarin, the decadence of Spain, the policy of Cromwell, who supported the growing power of France against the declining power of Spain, and the subservience of Charles II. and his successor to Lewis XIV., had together produced a French ascendancy which seemed likely to overshadow all the liberties of Europe. The Revolution had done much to restore the balance of power, but still French influence in many quarters continued steadily to advance, though two great wars had been undertaken for the purpose of abridging it. France had obtained Alsace by the Peace of Westphalia, with the exception of ten Imperial towns, the liberty of which was solemnly

guaranteed, but she soon began to treat those towns exactly like the rest of the province. Strasburg, which was by far the most important of them, she had surprised and seized in 1681, by an act of high-handed violence in a time of perfect peace, and without a shadow of justification or excuse. The Emperor, embarrassed by a Turkish war and by Hungarian insurrection, was unable to resent the aggression, and the Peace of Ryswick, which terminated the great war of the Revolution, confirmed and sanctioned it. The wars of Marlborough for a time brought France apparently to the lowest depths of exhaustion, but the Peace of Utrecht restored to her much of what she had lost. A French prince remained upon the Spanish throne, and her military power was still so formidable that as soon as the peace had dissolved the coalition against her, she completely routed the forces of the Empire, though Eugene was at their head. On sea, it is true, she never recovered the ascendancy she lost at La Hogue, but on land no one Power could compete with her. She had brought the art of war to such perfection that in the course of a single reign no less than five generals—Condé, Turenne, Luxemburg, Vendome, and Villars—of brilliant and extraordinary ability, appeared in her armies; and it is remarkable that Marlborough, who alone eclipsed them, had passed through the same school. He had served as a young man under Turenne, and he ascribed to the lessons he then learnt, much of his later success.[1] The alienation between France and Spain which followed the death of Lewis XIV. had for a time interrupted the course of French ambition, but it had been appeased by the conciliatory policy of Fleury, and the firstfruits of the reconciliation had been the decline of Austrian influence in Italy, the elevation of a Bourbon prince to the Neapolitan throne, and the consolidation of the French territory by the reversion of Lorraine.

It is not surprising that this increase of French power should have excited deep alarm. In the interval between the first decadence of Spain and the rise of Prussia and Russia, Austria was the only serious competitor of France upon the Continent, and Austria was certainly inferior in strength to her old rival, and, except on the side of Turkey, she seemed steadily

[1] *Mémoires de Torcy*, ii. 89.

declining. The House of Austria, which had once, in the person of Charles V., almost given law to Europe, and had led a French king captive to Madrid, was now so weakened that it was defeated in almost every war, and nearly every generation seemed to mark a stage in its decline. France had succeeded in her old object of dissevering from the Empire the vast dominions of Spain. She had pushed her frontiers into Germany. She had acquired such an ascendency over some of the Electors of the Empire that it was even likely that the House of Austria would soon be deprived of the Imperial crown. She had shaken and almost destroyed that Austrian supremacy in Italy which the Peace of Utrecht and the Quadruple Alliance had established. In modern times her power in Europe has been to a great degree paralysed by the intensity of her internal divisions, while her progress in more distant quarters has been restricted by an incurable incapacity for successful colonisation, due principally to the French passion for centralisation and over-administration. But these sources of weakness were as yet unperceived. No nation in its dealings with surrounding countries exhibited a greater unity or concentration of resources, and there appeared as yet no clear reason why, in the race of colonial enterprise, she should not become the successful rival of England. On the other hand, France already exhibited to the highest perfection that rare capacity of assimilating to herself the provinces she annexed, which has been one of the chief sources of her greatness, one of the most remarkable proofs of the high qualities of her national character. No modern nation which has annexed so much has been so little distracted by the struggles of suppressed nationalities, or has succeeded so perfectly in times of danger, difficulty, and disaster in commanding the enthusiastic devotion of the most distant and the most recently acquired of her provinces. Her military system has, no doubt, done much to give a unity of sympathy and enthusiasm to the nation. Paris, owing to causes some of which have been very mischievous, early exercised a fascination over the imaginations of great masses of men such as no other modern capital has possessed, but all this would have been insufficient had there not been an unrivalled power of attraction, sympathy, and assimilation in the French character, a power in which Englishmen are signally

deficient, and which has made French ambition peculiarly formidable.

On such grounds as these the Opposition were never tired of urging that France was rapidly advancing towards universal empire, and that unless she were speedily checked, the liberties of England must ultimately succumb. On sea England was, they admitted, still supreme, but of all forms of power this, they said, was the most precarious. An accident, a blunder, an unfavourable wind, might expose her coast to invasion, even in the zenith of her maritime greatness. The naval supremacy of Carthage had not saved her from destruction when Rome became dominant in the neighbouring continent. The naval supremacy of Spain had been irretrievably ruined by the failure of a single expedition, and the destruction of the Armada was much more due to the fury of the elements than to the fleet that was opposed to it. The naval supremacy of England had trembled very doubtfully in the balance after the battle of Beachy Head; and the battle of La Hogue, which re-established it, might have had a different issue had not the French Admiral been unexpectedly confronted with the fleet of Holland as well as the fleet of England. Besides this, it was added, if France could once place herself beyond rivalry on the Continent she might diminish her armies and devote the main energies of the State to securing the empire of the sea.

Fears of this kind have in many periods haunted speculative politicians, who have usually not fully realised the magnitude of the difficulties which any attempt to obtain universal empire must encounter, the extreme complexity of the forces on which in modern society political power depends, and also the very narrow limits within which all sound political prediction is confined. Walpole, however, was steadily in favour of peace. He felt all the antipathy of a great practical statesman to a policy which would expose the country to the imminent dangers, to the inevitable exhaustion of an European war, in order to avert dangers that were far distant, uncertain, and perhaps visionary. He maintained that a war for the succession of Poland was one in which England had no reasonable concern; that if she engaged in it the burden could not fail to produce the most dangerous discontent among the English people; that the diminution of the Imperial

influence in Italy in no degree affected English interests, especially as France obtained no territory in that country; that the system, which was becoming chronic, of involving England in every Continental, and especially in every German, complication was fatal to her security and utterly incompatible with her true interests. The French alliance had already produced the greatest benefits to England. The point upon the Continent where French ambition was most dangerous was the Dutch barrier, but Fleury had very judiciously abstained from all hostilities against the Austrian Netherlands, though they were left almost undefended, and Holland was quite resolved to persist in her neutrality. Under the influence of a long peace the country was steadily advancing in prosperity and wealth, and in all the elements of real power, and the new dynasty and the parliamentary system were beginning to take root. A foreign war would at once arrest the progress, and Walpole predicted[1]—and the event fully justified his prescience—that it would inevitably lead to a new Jacobite rebellion. Besides this, a strong detestation of war was one of his most honourable characteristics. 'It requires no great art,' he once said, 'in a minister to pursue such measures as might make war inevitable. I have lived long enough in the world to see how destructive the effects even of a successful war have been, and shall I, who see this, when I am admitted to the honour to bear a share in His Majesty's councils, advise him to enter into a war when peace may be had? No, I am proud to own it, I always have been, and I always shall be the advocate of peace.' The statesman who was continually accused by his contemporaries of sacrificing all English interests to the German policy of the Court, and who is now often described as incapable of risking for a moment his position in the interests of his country, was for a considerable time engaged in saving England from a German war in opposition to the strongest wishes both of the King and of the Queen. It is remarkable that his arguments in favour of a peace policy were chiefly conveyed to the King through the medium of the Queen, who was herself an advocate of war, and it is still more remarkable that she discharged her office with such fidelity and force that the arguments she transmitted actually convinced the King while

[1] Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 375.

her own judgment remained unchanged.[1] It is true, indeed, that in the latter part of his career Walpole was driven into war with Spain; but not until public excitement, aggravated by an unscrupulous Opposition, had risen to such a frenzy that no Government could resist it, not until the convention he had negotiated between England and Spain had been generally scouted. For many years, however, he succeeded, in spite of constant opposition, in keeping the country in undisturbed peace, and by doing so he conferred both upon his nation and upon his party an inestimable benefit. To the long peace of Walpole was mainly due the immense material development which contributed so largely to the success of later wars, and also most probably the firm establishment of parliamentary government and of the Hanoverian dynasty. The greatest danger to the Whig party, and the greatest danger to the country from its supremacy, lay in the traditions of its foreign policy, and those traditions Walpole resolutely cut. He has been much blamed for having taken no steps during his long ministry to break the power of the Highland chiefs, by whom the rebellion of 1745 was mainly effected. In a country where the clan feeling was still extremely strong, such steps would, it appears to me, have been the most natural means of producing an immediate revolt, and thus stirring up all the elements of discontent that were smouldering throughout the nation. On the other hand, it is scarcely doubtful that if the pacific policy which Walpole desired, had continued, the rebellion would never have broken out; and it was the direct result of the conciliatory measures of his administration that when it did break out it found no sympathy in England, and was in consequence easily suppressed.

It is worthy of notice that the long ascendency of Walpole was in no degree owing to any extraordinary brilliancy of eloquence. He was a clear and forcible reasoner, ready in reply, and peculiarly successful in financial exposition, but he had little or nothing of the temperament or the talent of an orator. It is the custom of some writers to decry parliamentary institutions as being simply government by talking, and to assert that when they exist mere rhetorical skill will always be more valued than judgment, knowledge, or character. The enormous

[1] Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 397.

exaggeration of such charges may be easily established. It is, no doubt, inevitable that where business is transacted chiefly by debate, the talent of a debater should be highly prized; but it is perfectly untrue that British legislatures have shown less skill than ordinary sovereigns in distinguishing solid talent from mere showy accomplishments, or that parliamentary weight has in England been usually proportioned to oratorical power. St. John was a far greater orator than Harley; Pulteney was probably a greater orator than Walpole; Stanley in mere rhetorical skill was undoubtedly the superior of Peel. Godolphin, Pelham, Castlereagh, Liverpool, Melbourne, Althorp, Wellington, Lord J. Russell, and Lord Palmerston are all examples of men who, either as statesmen or as successful leaders of the House of Commons, have taken a foremost place in English politics without any oratorical brilliancy. Sheridan, Plunket, and Brougham, though orators of almost the highest class, left no deep impression on English public life; the ascendency of Grey and Canning was very transient, and no Opposition since the early Hanoverian period sank so low as that which was guided by Fox. The two Pitts and Mr. Gladstone are the three examples of speakers of transcendent power exercising for a considerable time a commanding influence over English politics. The younger Pitt is, I believe, a real instance of a man whose solid ability bore no kind of proportion to his oratorical skill, and who, by an almost preternatural dexterity in debate, accompanied by great decision of character, and assisted by the favour of the King, by the magic of an illustrious name, and by a great national panic, maintained an authority immensely greater than his deserts. But in this respect he stands alone. The pinnacle of glory to which the elder Pitt raised his country is a sufficient proof of the almost unequalled administrative genius which he displayed in the conduct of a war; and in the sphere of domestic policy it may be questioned whether any other English minister since the accession of the House of Brunswick has carried so many measures of magnitude and difficulty, or exhibited so perfect a mastery over the financial system of the country as the great living statesman.

The qualities of Walpole were very different, but it is impossible, I think, to consider his career with adequate attention

without recognising in him a great minister, although the merits of his administration were often rather negative than positive, and although it exhibits few of those dramatic incidents, and is but little susceptible of that rhetorical colouring, on which the reputation of statesmen largely depends. Without any remarkable originality of thought or creative genius, he possessed in a high degree one quality of a great statesman —the power of judging new and startling events in the moments of excitement or of panic as they would be judged by ordinary men when the excitement, the novelty, and the panic had passed. He was eminently true to the character of his countrymen. He discerned with a rare sagacity the lines of policy most suited to their genius and to their needs, and he had a sufficient ascendency in English politics to form its traditions, to give a character and a bias to its institutions. The Whig party, under his guidance, retained, though with diminished energy, its old love of civil and of religious liberty, but it lost its foreign sympathies, its tendency to extravagance, its military restlessness. The landed gentry, and in a great degree the Church, were reconciled to the new dynasty. The dangerous fissures which divided the English nation were filled up. Parliamentary government lost its old violence, it entered into a period of normal and pacific action, and the habits of compromise, of moderation, and of practical good sense, which are most essential to its success, were greatly strengthened.

These were the great merits of Walpole. His faults were very manifest, and are to be attributed in part to his own character, but in a great degree to the moral atmosphere of his time. He was an honest man in the sense of desiring sincerely the welfare of his country and serving his sovereign with fidelity; but he was intensely wedded to power, exceedingly unscrupulous about the means of grasping or retaining it, and entirely destitute of that delicacy of honour which marks a high-minded man. In the opinion of most of his contemporaries, Townshend and Walpole had good reason to complain of the intrigues by which Sunderland and Stanhope obtained the supreme power in 1717; but this does not justify the factious manner in which Walpole opposed every measure the new ministry brought forward—even the Mutiny Act, which was

plainly necessary to keep the army in discipline; even the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, though he had himself denounced those Acts as more like laws of Julian the Apostate than of a Christian Legislature. He was sincerely tolerant in his disposition, and probably did as much for the benefit of the Dissenters as could have been done without producing a violent and dangerous reaction of opinion; but he took no measure to lighten the burden of the Irish penal code, and he had no scruple in availing himself of the strong feeling against the English Catholics and Non-jurors to raise 100,000*l.* by a special tax upon their estates, or in promising the Dissenters that he would obtain the repeal of the Test Act, when he had no serious intention of doing so. He warned the country faithfully against the South Sea Scheme, but when his warning was disregarded he proceeded to speculate skilfully and successfully in it himself. He laboured long and earnestly to prevent the Spanish war, which he knew to be eminently impolitic; but when the clamours of his opponents had made it inevitable he determined that he would still remain at the helm, and he accordingly declared it himself. He governed the country mildly and wisely, but he was resolved at all hazards to secure for himself a complete monopoly of power; he steadily opposed the reconciliation of the Tories with the Hanoverian dynasty,[1] lest it should impair his ascendancy, surrounded himself with colleagues whose faculties rarely rose above the tamest mediocrity, drove from power every man of real talent who might possibly become his rival, and especially repelled young men of promise, character, and ambition, whom a provident statesman, desirous of perpetuating his policy beyond his lifetime, would especially seek to attract.

The scandal and also the evil effects of his political vices were greatly increased by that total want of decorum which Burke has justly noted as the weakest point of his character. In this respect his public and private life resembled one another. That he lived for many years in open adultery, and indulged to excess in the pleasures of the table, were facts which in the early part of the eighteenth century were in themselves not likely to excite much

[1] See the striking remarks of Speaker Onslow on Walpole's settled 'plan of having everybody to be deemed a Jacobite who was not a professed and known Whig.'—Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 554–557.

attention; but his boisterous revelries at Houghton exceeded even the ordinary licence of the country squires of his time, and the gross sensuality of his conversation was conspicuous in one of the coarsest periods of English history. When he did not talk of business, it was said, he talked of women; politics and obscenity were his tastes. There seldom was a Court less addicted to prudery than that of George II., but even its tolerance was somewhat strained by a minister who jested with the Queen upon the infidelity of her husband, who advised her on one occasion to bring to Court a beautiful but silly woman as a 'safe fool' for the King to fall in love with, who, on the death of the Queen, urged her daughters to summon without delay the two mistresses of the King in order to distract the mind of their father; who at the same time avowed, with a brutal frankness, as the scheme of his future policy, that though he had been for the wife against the mistress, he would be henceforth for the mistress against the daughters.[1] In society he had the weakness of wishing to be thought a man of gallantry and fashion, and his awkward addresses, rendered the more ludicrous by a singularly corpulent and ungraceful person, as well as the extreme coarseness into which he usually glided when speaking to and of women, drew down upon him much ridicule and some contempt. His estimate of political integrity was very similar to his estimate of female virtue. He governed by means of an assembly which was saturated with corruption, and he fully acquiesced in its conditions and resisted every attempt to improve it. He appears to have cordially accepted the maxim that government must be carried on by corruption or by force, and he deliberately made the former the basis of his rule. He bribed George II. by obtaining for him a civil list exceeding by more than 100,000*l.* a year that of his father. He bribed the Queen by securing for her a jointure of 100,000*l.* a year, when his rival, Sir Spencer Compton, could only venture to promise 60,000*l.* He bribed the Dissenting ministers to silence by the Regium Donum for the benefit of their widows. He employed the vast patronage of the Crown uniformly and steadily with the single view of sustaining his political position, and there can be no doubt that a large proportion of the immense expenditure of

[1] *Memoirs of Lord Hervey.*

secret service money during his administration was devoted to the direct purchase of Members of Parliament.

It is necessary to speak with much caution on this matter, remembering that no statesman can emancipate himself from the conditions of his time, and that a great injustice is done when the politician of one age is measured by the standard of another. Bribery, whether at elections or in Parliament, was no new thing. The systematic corruption of Members of Parliament is said to have begun under Charles II., in whose reign it was practised to the largest extent. It was continued under his successor, and the number of scandals rather increased than diminished after the Revolution. Sir J. Trevor—a Speaker of the House of Commons—had been voted guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour for receiving a bribe of 1,000 guineas from the City of London. A Secretary of the Treasury—Mr. Guy—had been sent to the Tower for taking a bribe to induce him to pay the arrears due to a regiment. Lord Ranelagh, a Paymaster of the Forces, had been expelled for defalcations in his office. In order to facilitate the passing of the South Sea Bill, it was proved that large amounts of fictitious stock had been created, distributed among, and accepted by, ministers of the Crown. Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was expelled, sent to the Tower, and fined. The younger Craggs, who was Secretary of State, probably only escaped by a timely death. His father, the Postmaster-General, avoided inquiry by suicide, and grave suspicion rested upon Charles Stanhope, the Secretary of the Treasury, and upon Sunderland, the Prime Minister. When such instances could be cited from among the leaders of politics, it is not surprising that among the undistinguished Members corruption was notorious. In 1698, a system of fraudulent endorsement of Exchequer bills with a view to defraud the revenue was discovered, and two Members of Parliament were sent to the Tower and expelled for being guilty of it. The expulsion of Hungerford for receiving a small sum for expediting a private Bill through Parliament, of the two Shepherds for bribery at elections, of Sir R. Sutton for having through carelessness become director of a swindling company, of Ridge for the non-observance of a contract, of Colonel Cardonell for accepting an illegal though customary gratuity, of Walpole

himself for alleged dishonesty about a contract, were probably inspired chiefly or solely by factious motives,[1] but there can at least be no reasonable doubt that parliamentary corruption does not date from the ministry of Walpole. Nor was he the first to practise largely corruption at elections. Burnet assures us that at the elections of 1701, when William was still on the throne, 'a most scandalous practice was brought in of buying votes with so little decency that the electors engaged themselves by subscription to choose a blank person before they were trusted with the name of their candidate.'[2] I have cited in the last chapter the explicit testimony of Davenant to the magnitude of the evil in his day, and the writings of Defoe contain ample proof of its inveteracy and of its progress. In a pamphlet published in 1701, he tells us that there was a regular set of stock-jobbers in the City who made it their business to buy and sell seats in Parliament, that the market price was 1,000 guineas, and that Parliament was thus in a fair way of coming under the management of a few individuals.[3] In 1705, after adverting to some Acts which had been passed against bribery, he adds emphatically, 'Never was treating, bribery, buying of voices, freedoms and freeholds, and all the corrupt practices in the world so open and barefaced as since these severe laws were enacted.'[4] In 1708 he declared that, having been present at many elections, he had arrived at the conclusion that 'it is not an impossible thing to debauch this nation into a choice of thieves, knaves, devils, anything, comparatively speaking, by the power of various intoxications.'[5] The evil showed no sign of diminution. In 1716 we find bitter complaints in Parliament itself of the rapidly increasing expense of elections,[6] and the Earl of Dorset spoke of it as a notorious fact 'that a great number of persons have no other livelihood than by being employed in bribing corporations.'[7]

And if corruption did not begin with Walpole, it is equally

[1] Townsend's *Hist. of the House of Commons*, ch. iv., v.

[2] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 258–259.

[3] From 'The Freeholder's Plea against Stock-jobbing Elections of Parliament.'—Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 340–341. Mr. Hallam must have somewhat strangely overlooked this passage, as well as some others which I have cited in the last chapter, when he speaks of the purchase of seats of Parliament as first observed in the elections of 1747 and 1754.—*Const. Hist.* iii. 302.

[4] 'Review.' See Wilson, ii. 362.

[5] Ibid. Wilson, iii. 23–24.

[6] *Parl. Hist.* vii. 335.

[7] Ibid. 297.

certain that it did not end with him. His expenditure of secret service money, large as it was, never equalled in an equal space of time the expenditure of Bute; and it is to Bute, and not to Walpole, that we owe the most gigantic and most wasteful of all the forms of bribery, the custom of issuing loans on terms extravagantly advantageous to the lender, and distributing the shares among the supporters of the administration. The downfall of Walpole can scarcely be said to have produced even a temporary cessation of corruption. In 1754, Sir J. Barnard, with a view to the approaching elections, actually moved the repeal of the oath against bribery, in the interest of public morals, on the ground that it was merely the occasion of general perjury.[1] In the same year Fox declined to accept from Newcastle the lead of the House of Commons, unless he received information about the disposition of the secret service money, because, as he said, 'if he was kept in ignorance of that, he should not know how to talk to Members of Parliament, when some might have received gratifications, others not.'[2] Very few statesmen of the eighteenth century had less natural tendency to corruption than George Grenville. His private character was unimpeachable. His alteration of the mode of trying contested elections was a great step towards the purification of Parliament, and the expenditure of secret service money during his administration was unusually low;[3] yet such was the condition of the Legislature by which he governed, that he appears to have found it necessary to offer direct money bribes even to Members of the House of Lords.[4] If Walpole

[1] Walpole's *Memoir of George II.* i. 369.

[2] Ibid. vol. i. p. 382.

[3] *Grenville Correspondence*, iii. p. 143.

[4] The following very curious note from Lord Saye and Sele to Grenville has been preserved. The tone of the writer makes it almost certain that the transaction referred to was not regarded as either unusual or insulting:—

'London, Nov. 26, 1763.

'Honoured Sir,—I am very much obliged to you for that freedom of converse you this morning indulged me in, which I prize more than the lucrative advantage I then received. To show the sincerity of my words (pardon, Sir, the perhaps over-niceness of my disposition) I return enclosed the bill for 300*l.* you favoured me with, as good manners would not permit my refusal of it when tendered by you. Your most obliged and most obedient servant, SAYE & SELE.

'P.S. As a free horse needs no spur, so I stand in need of no inducement or douceur to lend my small assistance to the King and his friends in the present administration.'—*Grenville Correspondence*, iii. 145–146.

was guilty of corruption, it may be fairly urged that it was scarcely possible to manage Parliament without it, and also that skilful writers, under the guidance of Bolingbroke, were studiously aggravating his faults. He was, no doubt, often misrepresented. His saying of a group of Members, 'All these men have their price,' was turned into a general assertion that 'all men have their price;' and there was probably some truth in another saying ascribed to him,—'that he was obliged to bribe Members not to vote against, but for their conscience.' Although in the case of a minister who had very few scruples, and who disposed, absolutely for many years, of immense sums of secret service money, it is impossible to speak with confidence, we may at least affirm that there is no real evidence that Walpole dishonestly appropriated public money to his own purposes, and he retired from office deeply in debt.

The real charge against him is that in a period of profound peace, when he exercised an almost unexampled ascendancy in politics, and when public opinion was strongly in favour of the diminution of corrupt influence in Parliament, he steadily and successfully resisted every attempt at reform. Other ministers may have bribed on a larger scale to gain some special object, or in moments of transition, crisis, or difficulty. It was left to Walpole to organise corruption as a system, and to make it the normal process of Parliamentary government. It was his settled policy to maintain his Parliamentary majority, not by attracting to his ministry great orators, great writers, great financiers, or great statesmen, not by effecting any combination or coalition of parties, by identifying himself with any great object of popular desire, or by winning to his side young men in whose character and ability he could trace the promise of future eminence, but simply by engrossing borough influence and extending the patronage of the Crown. Material motives were the only ones he recognised. During several successive Parliaments the majority of the counties were usually in opposition.[1] It was by the purchase of a multitude of small and perfectly venal boroughs, especially in Cornwall and Scotland, that the Government majority was maintained. Whenever

[1] See a remarkable statement of Horace Walpole. *Memoirs of George II.* i. 406.

there was a choice between a man of ability and a man possessing large borough influence, the latter was invariably preferred. Thus it was that in 1724 Carteret was displaced from the Secretaryship of War, and the claims of Pulteney were neglected in order that Walpole might attach to his fortunes the Duke of Newcastle, who was the greatest borough-owner in the kingdom, but whose weak and timid character he was the first to ridicule. Thus it was that he met and defeated every effort to reduce the pension lists, and to enquire into the corruption of Parliament. He made it, said one who knew him well, a main object at all times, and on all occasions, to prevent Parliamentary enquiries.[1] Pension Bill after Pension Bill was brought in with the strong support of public opinion. Sometimes he openly opposed them. More frequently he suffered them to pass the Commons, and employed his influence to stifle them in the Lords. Always he made it his object to discourage and defeat them. He constructed a system under which a despotic sovereign or minister might make a Parliamentary majority one of the most subservient and efficient instruments for destroying the liberties of England; and although he himself used it with signal moderation, he bequeathed it intact to his successors, and it became, under George III., the great instrument of misgovernment.

His influence upon young men appears to have been peculiarly pernicious. If we may believe Chesterfield, he was accustomed to ask them in a tone of irony upon their entrance into Parliament whether they too were going to be saints or Romans, and he employed all the weight of his position to make them regard purity and patriotism as ridiculous or unmanly.[2] Of the next generation of statesmen, Fox, the first Lord Holland, was the only man of remarkable ability who can be said to have been his disciple, and he was, perhaps, the most corrupt and unscrupulous of the statesmen of his age.

Specific instances of Parliamentary corruption are a class of facts little likely to pass into the domain of history. The secret nature of the act, the interests both of the giver and the recipient, and the general tone and feelings of the politicians of

[1] Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 224.
[2] Chesterfield's *Miscellaneous Works* (ed. 1779), iv. append. p. 36.

the time, conspire to conceal them, and although public opinion forced on an enquiry into the acts of Walpole, and although the great majority of the commissioners were his personal enemies, no considerable results were arrived at. Nor was this surprising. The whole influence of the Crown and of the House of Lords was exerted to shield the fallen minister, and there was on the part of most leading politicians, and, indeed, of most Members of Parliament, a marked indisposition to enquire too curiously into such matters. Edgecumbe, who chiefly managed the Cornish boroughs, was made a peer expressly for the purpose of preventing the Committee from requiring his evidence.[1] The officials who distributed the secret service money positively refused to give any evidence as to the manner of its distribution, on the ground that they might otherwise criminate themselves. The Secretary of the Treasury, who could probably have thrown most light upon the subject, as the whole secret service money passed through his hands, declined to take the oath of discovery, and informed the Committee 'that he had laid his case before the King, and was authorised to say that the disposal of money issued for secret service, by the nature of it, requires the utmost secrecy, and is accountable to his Majesty alone; and therefore his Majesty could not permit him to disclose anything on the subject.'[2] The Committee were completely baffled. Those who distributed the secret service money refused to give any evidence, and it was hardly to be expected that those who received it would criminate themselves by confession. A Bill was brought forward to indemnify the recipients of bribes if they gave evidence against Walpole, but though it passed the Commons, it was rejected by the Lords. Under these circumstances we can hardly lay much stress upon the fact that the discoveries of the Committee were chiefly of the most trivial description. The bestowal of places on the Mayor of Weymouth and on his brother-in-law, in order to secure the nomination of a favourable returning officer at an election, the removal of a few revenue officers who failed to vote for a ministerial candidate, the distribution of some small sums for borough prosecutions and suits, the somewhat suspiciously liberal terms

[1] Walpole's *Letters*, i. p. 175. [2] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. p. 712.

of a contract for the payment of British troops at Jamaica, were all matters which appeared of little moment when they were regarded as the result of a solemn enquiry into ministerial proceedings for ten years. Much more important was the discovery that in this space of time no less than 1,453,400*l.* had been expended in secret service money, and that of that sum above 50,000*l.* had been paid to writers in defence of the ministry. It has been shown, indeed, by the apologists for Walpole that the secret service money included the whole pension list, as well as the large sums necessarily expended in obtaining information at foreign Courts, and also that the comparisons instituted between the expenditure of secret service money in the last ten years of Walpole, and that in an equal portion of the reign of Anne, were in several respects fallacious;[1] but there cannot, I think, be much reasonable doubt, though the Committee were unable to obtain evidence on the subject, that much of it was expended in Parliamentary corruption. It is said that supporters of the Government frequently received at the close of the session from 500*l.* to 1,000*l.* for their services;[2] that Walpole himself boasted that one important division rejecting the demand of the Prince of Wales for an increased allowance cost the Government only 900*l.*,[3] that more than half the members of Parliament were in the receipt of public money in the form of pensions or Government offices.[4] It is certain that the consentient opinion of contemporaries accused

[1] See the elaborate chapter in Coxe, on the report of the Committee.

[2] Almon's *Anecdotes of Chatham*, vol. i. p. 137. This was written of the Pelham ministry, but that ministry only continued in a somewhat more moderate form the system of Walpole. Wraxall positively asserts that Roberts, who was Secretary of the Treasury under Pelham, assured a friend, from whom Wraxall received the story, that he, Roberts, while he remained at the Treasury regularly paid secret stipends varying from 500*l.* to 800*l.* to a number of Members at the end of each session. Their names were entered in a book which was kept in the deepest secrecy and which on the death of Pelham was burnt by the King.'—See Wraxall's *Memoirs* (1815), ii. 498, 500.

[3] 'Sir R. Walpole and the Queen both told me separately that it [the ministerial triumph] cost the King but 900*l.*—500*l.* to one man and 400*l.* to another; and that even these two sums *were only advanced to two men who were to have received them at the end of the session had this question never been moved*, and who only took this opportunity to solicit prompt payment.'—Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 280.

[4] Some interesting facts on the fluctuations of the number of placemen in Parliament will be found in Brougham's great speech on the increasing influence of the Crown. June 24, 1822.

the ministers of gross and wholesale corruption, and that they uniformly opposed every enquiry that could vindicate their honour, and every Bill that could tend to purify the Parliament.

The complaints of the Opposition were met by Walpole in a strain of coarse and cynical banter. Patriots, saints, Spartans, and boys were the terms he continually employed. Something, no doubt, was due to the strong hatred of cant which was a prominent feature of his character, and which sometimes led him, like his great contemporary Swift, into the opposite extreme of cynicism. He knew that he was speaking the secret sentiments of the great majority of his hearers, that among the declaimers against corruption were some of the most treacherous and unprincipled politicians of the time, and that personal disappointment and baffled ambition had their full share in swelling the ranks of his opponents; but when every allowance is made for this, his language must appear grossly culpable. He profoundly lowered the moral tone of public life, and thus, as an acute observer has said, 'While he seemed to strengthen the superstructure, he weakened the foundations of our constitution.'[1] Nor is it true that the politicians of the time were universally corrupt. Godolphin and Bolingbroke had both retired from their ministerial careers poor men. Oxford was in this respect beyond all reproach. Neither Pulteney, nor Windham, nor Onslow, nor Carteret, nor Shippen, nor Barnard, nor Pitt, whatever their other faults, could be suspected of personal corruption. Above all, there was the public opinion of England which was deeply scandalised by the extent to which parliamentary corruption had arisen, and by the cynicism with which it was avowed, and on this point, though on this alone, Walpole never respected it. Like many men of low morals and of coarse and prosaic natures, he was altogether incapable of appreciating as an element of political calculation the force which moral sentiments exercise upon mankind, and this incapacity was one of the great causes of his fall. His own son has made the memorable admission that Walpole 'never was thought honest till he was out of power.'[2]

[1] Browne's *Estimate*, i. p. 115.
[2] Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. 236.

'Through these faults, as well as through the discontent which always follows the great prolongation of a single administration, a powerful though heterogeneous Opposition was gradually formed, and the small band of Tories were reinforced by a considerable section of discontented Whigs, who seceded under the guidance of Pulteney, Carteret, and Chesterfield, and by several young men of promise or genius. Pulteney, who usually led the phalanx, had been for many years the friend and colleague of Walpole. He had co-operated with him during the depression of the party under Queen Anne, defended him when he was expelled from the House in 1712, assumed the office of Secretary of War in the Whig ministry of 1714, taken the same side with Walpole in the Whig schism of 1717, and he appeared at one time likely to rise at least as high in the State. He was a country gentleman of good character, old family, and large property, a scholar, a writer, and a wit, and probably the most graceful and brilliant speaker in the House of Commons in the interval between the withdrawal of St. John and the appearance of Pitt. His separation from Walpole appears to have been wholly due to personal motives. Possessing abilities and parliamentary standing which entitled him, in his own opinion and in the opinion of many others, to rank as the equal of Walpole, he found that Walpole allowed his colleagues little more influence than if they were his clerks, and was always seeking, by direct or indirect means, to displace them when they became prominent. He is said to have been bitterly offended when Carteret, having in 1724 resigned the position of Secretary of State, the claims of Newcastle were preferred to his own, and the offer of a peerage, which was intended only to remove him from the centre of power, and afterwards of a very unimportant place, completed his alienation. He went into violent opposition, rejected scornfully the overtures of the minister, who when too late perceived his error, dedicated all his powers to the subversion of the administration, and became the most skilful exponent of the popular feeling about the corruption of Parliament, the subservience of Walpole to France and to Spain, and the dangers of a standing army in time of peace. He was bitterly opposed to the Gallican sympathies of Walpole, and especially to the Treaty of Hanover, and was for some time in very close and

confidential communication with the ministers of the Emperor.[1] Of all the opponents of Walpole he was probably the most formidable, for he seems to have been at least his equal as a debater; his great social talents made him popular among politicians, and he at the same time exercised a powerful influence beyond the walls of Parliament. 'The Craftsman,' which for many years contained the bitterest and ablest attacks on Walpole, was founded, inspired, and perhaps in part written[2] by Pulteney in conjunction with Bolingbroke. He was also the author of two or three pamphlets of more than ordinary merit, of several happy witticisms which are still remembered, and of a political song which was once among the most popular in the language.[3] When accused of being actuated in his opposition by sordid motives, he incautiously pledged himself never again to accept office, and in the hour of his triumph he remembered his pledge; but he cannot be acquitted of having shaped his career through a feeling of personal rancour, he never exhibited either the business talents or the tact and prescience of statesmanship so conspicuous in his rival, and he probably contributed more than any other single man to plunge the country into the Spanish war.

A more remarkable man, but a less formidable politician, was Carteret, afterwards Lord Granville, who at the time of the downfall of Walpole led the Whig Opposition in the House of Lords. He had entered the Upper House in 1711, had joined the Sunderland section of the Whigs in 1717, had been appointed ambassador to Sweden in the following year, and had afterwards accepted several brief diplomatic missions in Germany and France. On the death of Sunderland he made some unsuccessful efforts to perpetuate the division of the party, but his opposition to Walpole was at first rather latent than avowed. He became Secretary of State in 1721, but, disagreeing with

[1] See the intercepted letters of Count Palm printed in Coxe's *Life of Walpole*.

[2] Horace Walpole (to H. Mann, April 27, 1753) asserts that the printer of the 'Craftsman' assured him Pulteney 'never wrote a "Craftsman" himself, only gave hints for them,' though much of his reputation was founded upon them. As Pulteney was confessedly a skilful writer and pamphleteer, this story seems very improbable.

[3] 'The Honest Jury; or, Caleb Triumphant,' written on the occasion of the acquittal of the 'Craftsman' on a charge of libel.—*Wilkins' Collection of Political Ballads*, ii. 232–236.

his colleague Lord Townshend, he was compelled to relinquish the post in 1724, when he became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. After several differences with the ministry in England he resigned this appointment in 1730, and from that time became a leader of Opposition and a close ally of Pulteney. Of all the leading English statesmen of the eighteenth century he is, perhaps, the one of whose real merits it is most difficult to speak with confidence. Like Charles Townshend in the next generation, he was a man who had the very highest reputation for ability among his contemporaries, but whose ability we are obliged to take altogether upon trust, for, except some unpublished despatches, often full of fire and force, and a few detached sayings, he has left no monument behind him. His career was, on the whole, unsuccessful. His speeches have perished. His policy has come down to us chiefly through the representations of his opponents, and he himself appears to have taken no part in political literature. Yet Horace Walpole and Chesterfield, who disliked him, have both spoken of him as the ablest man of his time.[1] Swift and Smollett have expressed warm admiration for his genius, and Chatham, who was at one time his bitter opponent, has left on record his opinion that in the upper departments of Government he had no equal.[2] In the range and variety of his knowledge he was unrivalled among the politicians of his time, and the singular versatility of his intellect made him almost equally conspicuous as an orator, a linguist, a statesman, a scholar, and a wit. Having travelled much in Germany, he was probably the only English statesman intimately acquainted with its laws, manners, and internal politics; and his thorough knowledge of the language, then a very rare accomplishment in England, gave him a special influence with the Hanoverian kings. In Parliament he was placed, by the confession of all parties, in the foremost rank of debaters, but good judges complained that his eloquence was somewhat turgid and declamatory in its style, that he was more to be

[1] 'Lord Granville, they say, is dying. When he dies the ablest head in England dies too, take him for all in all.'—Chesterfield to his son, Dec. 13, 1762. See, too, his admirable portrait of Granville in his 'Characters.' Walpole pronounced him to be a greater genius than Sir R. Walpole, Mansfield, or Chatham.' —*Memoirs of George II.* iii. 85.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* xvi. 1097. He added, 'I feel a pride in declaring that to his patronage, to his friendship and instruction, I owe whatever I am.'

dreaded as an opponent than to be desired as a colleague, and that he was almost equally unfitted, by his defects and by his merits, for the position of a parliamentary leader.' He was of a careless, sanguine, impulsive, and desultory nature, easily and extravagantly elated and never depressed, delighting in intrigue and in strokes of sudden and brilliant daring, but apt to treat politics as a game, and almost wholly destitute of settled principles, fixity of purpose, and earnestness of character. His mind teemed with large schemes, and he could carry them out with courage and with skill, but he was not equally expert in dealing with details, and he looked with a contempt which had at least an affinity to virtue upon the arts of management, conciliation, and corruption, by which Walpole and Pelham secured their Parliamentary influence. 'What is it to me,' he once said, 'who is a judge or who a bishop? It is my business to make kings and emperors, and to maintain the balance of Europe.' His temper was naturally imperious. He was entirely indifferent to money. He drank hard. He overflowed with riotous animal spirits, scoffed and ranted at his colleagues or treated them with the most supercilious contempt; and though he could be at times the most generous and engaging of men, though no other statesman bore defeat with such unforced good humour, or showed himself so free from rancour against his opponents, he was not popular in the Cabinet and not trusted in Parliament. To the King, on the other hand, he was eminently acceptable. He succeeded in very skilfully flattering and almost winning the Queen at the very time when he was a leading counsellor in the rival party of her son. He had a strong natural leaning, intensified by education, to high monarchical views. He would gladly have based his power altogether on royal favour; he delighted in framing his measures with the King alone, and was the only English statesman who fully shared and perhaps fully understood the King's German policy. It was natural that his rare knowledge of Continental affairs should have invested them in his eyes with an interest and an attraction they did not possess in the eyes of ordinary politicians, and that he should have found in them a field peculiarly congenial to his daring and adventurous nature. 'I want to instil a nobler ambition into you,' he said to Fox in later years,

'to make you knock the heads of the kings of Europe together, and jumble something out of it which may be of service to this country.' As minister of a despotic sovereign he might have risen to great eminence, but he was not suited for the conditions of Parliamentary government, and he usually inclined towards unpopular opinions. Thus he was one of the most powerful opponents of the Militia Bill at a time when the creation of a great militia had almost become a national craze. He was accustomed to assert strongly the dignity of the House of Lords in opposition to the House of Commons. He ruined his political prospects by his bold advocacy of Hanoverian measures. The last public words he is recorded to have uttered were a stern rebuke to Pitt for having spoken of himself rather as the minister of the people than of the Crown, and for having thus introduced the language of the House of Commons into the discussions of the Cabinet; and his last recorded political judgment was an approbation of the unpopular Peace of Paris. His ambition, like his other qualities, was very spasmodic. He could cast aside its prizes with a frank and laughing carelessness that few could rival, but when heated with the contest he was accused of being equally capable of a policy of the most reckless daring and of the most paltry intrigue. Queen Caroline, reviewing the leaders of the Opposition, said that Bolingbroke would tell great lies, Chesterfield small ones, Carteret both kinds.[1]

Of Chesterfield it is not necessary to say much, for his part in the overthrow of Walpole was much less prominent. He was naturally most fitted to shine in a drawing-room, and though a graceful and accomplished, if somewhat laboured, speaker, his political talents, like those of Sir W. Temple in the preceding generation, were more adapted for diplomacy than for parliamentary life. He was twice ambassador to Holland and discharged his duties with great ability and success. During his short viceroyalty in Ireland he showed very remarkable ad-

[1] The principal materials for describing Carteret are to be found in Horace Walpole's *Letters* and *Historics*, Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, Chesterfield's *Characters*, Lady Hervey's *Letters*, Sir Hanbury Williams' *Songs*, and the recently published *Autobiography of Shelburne*. Many volumes and papers belonging to him are in the British Museum. It appears from Lord Hervey's *Memoirs* that Carteret was at one time occupied with a history of his own time, but it has unfortunately never appeared.

ministrative talents, and his letters to his illegitimate son, which were published contrary to his desire, furnish ample evidence of his delicate but fastidious taste, of his low moral principle, and of his hard, keen, and worldly wisdom. His life was darkened by much private sorrow, which he bore with great courage; and his political prospects were blasted by the hostility of the Queen, who never forgave him for having made his court to the mistress of her husband. Lord Hervey, comparing him to Carteret, says that Carteret had the better public and Court understanding, Chesterfield the better private and social one. His hostility to Walpole dates from his dismissal from office after the Excise scheme. On the fall of that minister he pressed on the measures against him much more violently than either Pulteney or Carteret.

In addition to these older politicians, the ranks of the opponents of Walpole contained a small group of young men who did not altogether coalesce with either party, and who were much ridiculed under the name of Boy Patriots, but who reckoned in their number several men of credit and ability, and one man of the most splendid and majestic genius. The principal members of this party were Lord Cobham, Lyttleton, George Grenville, and, above all, William Pitt. This last politician had entered Parliament for Old Sarum in 1735. He was still a very young and very poor man, holding the post of cornet in a regiment of dragoons, entirely destitute of the influence which springs from rank, experience, or Parliamentary connection, but already distinguished for the lofty purity of his character and for an eloquence which, in its full maturity, has, probably, never been equalled in England and never been surpassed among mankind.

The Tory wing of the Opposition appears to have been numerically about equal to the Whig one. It consisted of about 110 members, but it was far from unanimous. One section was distinctly Jacobite, and it was the policy of Government to attribute Jacobitism to the whole; but with many, Toryism was, probably, mainly a matter of family tradition, and consisted chiefly of attachment to the Established Church, and dislike to Hanoverian politics, to the moneyed interests, and to septennial parliaments. The party had for many years a skilful

and eloquent leader in Sir W. Windham—the son-in-law of the Duke of Somerset—who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer under Queen Anne, and who in that capacity had brought forward and carried the Schism Act. His death in 1740 was a great blow to the Opposition, and his successor, Lord Gower, afterwards abandoned the party. Among the Members who usually acted with the Tories was Sir John Barnard, a retired merchant, who had acquired great influence in the House as the only man capable of coping with Walpole on questions of finance, and the party included Shippen, the able and honest leader of the Jacobites. It consisted, for the most part, of country squires of little education and strong prejudices, but in general superior to their allies in rectitude of purpose and sincerity of conviction.

In addition to the parliamentary combatants there is another influence to be mentioned. Bolingbroke, though excluded from the parliamentary arena, had, as I have said, devoted his great experience and his brilliant pen to the service of the Opposition, and in one respect at least his policy was now the exact opposite to that which he had pursued under Anne. He had then, in opposition to Oxford, endeavoured to make the lines of party division as clear and strong as possible, to put an end to the system of divided administrations, and to expel all Whigs from the Government. Now, however, when his party was apparently hopelessly shattered, he employed all his talents in the task of effecting a union between the Tories and a large section of the Whigs. In his 'Dissertation on Parties' and in his private letters, he maintained strongly that the old demarcation of parties had lost all meaning; that the question of dynasty was virtually settled; that the Whig enthusiasm for the House of Hanover was chiefly a party pretext for monopolising all the offices of the State and excluding the Tories as enemies to the establishment; and that this monopoly and this exclusion had necessarily led to an aggrandisement of corrupt influence on the side of those in power, which was fatal to the purity and might easily prove incompatible with the existence of the constitution.[1] Corruption, he was accustomed to main-

[1] See among other letters a very remarkable one to Lord Polwarth, *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 177–191.

tain, is much more dangerous to English liberty than prerogative, because it is slow and insensible in its operation, because it arouses no feeling of opposition in the country like that which follows an unconstitutional act, and because its influence is especially felt in the very House which is the appointed guardian of the interests of the people. A warm and affectionate friendship with Windham gave Bolingbroke for a considerable time an ascendancy over those Tories who had abandoned Jacobitism, while his position as coeditor with Pulteney of the 'Craftsman,' and his confidential relations with many of the discontented Whigs gave him influence with the other section of the Opposition. Bolingbroke, however, was unpopular in the country; he was wearied of the secondary place he was compelled to occupy in party warfare, and owing to this and perhaps to other causes which we are not able to unravel, he retired to France in 1735, and did not again visit England till after the downfall of Walpole. Before his departure, however, he had obtained a great ascendancy over the mind of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who soon became the leading opponent of the Government. It is natural in a government like that of England, that a party in opposition should turn their hopes to the successor of the throne, and it is equally natural that an ambitious Prince should lean towards a course of policy which alone during his father's lifetime enables him to take an independent and a foremost place. Many private causes conspired to inflame the jealousy. The Prince desired to marry a Prussian Princess, and the King refused his request. After the marriage of the Prince with the Princess of Saxe Gotha, the King only granted him an allowance of 50,000*l.* a year, though the King himself when Prince of Wales had received an allowance of 100,000*l.* Besides this, the Prince's affable manners rendered him more popular in the country than the King, and his tastes inclined him to the brilliant literary and social circle which was in opposition to the ministry. From 1734 there was an open breach, and in 1737 the Prince took the extraordinary step of inducing the Opposition to bring forward a motion in Parliament urging the King to allow his son out of the Civil List 100,000*l.* a year. The Court was naturally furious, and Walpole succeeded with some difficulty in defeating the motion. Lord Hervey has left us a curious picture of the feelings

of the royal family at this time—the Queen a hundred times a day saying she wished her son would fall dead with apoplexy, cursing the hour of his birth, and describing him as 'a nauseous beast,' 'the greatest liar that ever spoke,' while his sister declared that she grudged him every hour he continued to breathe, and the King regarded him with a steady though somewhat calmer hatred. The Prince, on the other hand, seems to have lost no opportunity of irritating his father and his mother; and when his wife was in labour he hurried her, in the midst of her pains and at the imminent danger of her life, from Hampton Court to St. James's, for the sole purpose of insulting the King, who had given orders that the lying-in should take place at the former palace. With the same motive he made his Court the special centre of opposition to the Government, and he exerted all his influence for the ruin of Walpole.[1]

While all these elements of strength were combining against the minister, the death of the Queen[2] deprived him of his firmest friend. She died solemnly commending her husband to his care, and her loss was never replaced. He now stood alone, confronting all the ablest debaters in Parliament, whom his jealousy had driven into opposition, while intrigues and dissensions were undermining his position at the Court and in the Cabinet, and while a fierce storm of popular indignation was raging without. He had somewhat ostentatiously displayed his contempt for literature, and most of the ablest political writers were arrayed against him. He had ridiculed the cry of parliamentary purity and the aspirations of young politicians, and all the hope and promise of England was with his opponents. He had laboured through good report and through evil report to maintain the peace of Europe, and the Opposition leaders succeeded in arousing in the country a martial frenzy which it was impossible to resist.

The pretext was the severities of the Spaniards to English sailors. Spain, in attempting to monopolise the commerce of the most important part of the New World, and in forbidding all other European countries from holding intercourse with it, had advanced a claim which sooner or later must inevitably have

[1] Hervey's *Memoirs*. Walpole's *Reminiscences*.

[2] Nov. 20, 1737.

led to war. Her right, however, to regulate the traffic with her trans-Atlantic dominions had been fully recognised by England; the principle of trade monopoly was strenuously maintained by England in her own dominions, and by an article in the Treaty of Utrecht, in addition to the trade in negroes, English commerce with Spanish America had been expressly restricted to a single ship of the burden of 600 tons. This treaty was soon systematically violated. An immense illicit trade sprang up, which was for a time unmolested, but was afterwards met by a rigid exercise of the right of search on the high seas, and by the constant seizure of English ships, and it was accompanied on both sides by many acts of violence, insolence, and barbarity. A dispute had at the same time arisen between the two nations about the right of the English traders to cut logwood in the Bay of Campeachy, and to gather salt on the Island of Tortuga, and there were chronic difficulties about the frontiers of Georgia and Carolina on the one side, and of Florida on the other. For many years the ill-feeling smouldered on, and it gradually assumed very formidable proportions. The maintenance of the balance of power had been the chief cause of the wars of the century, and it was observed with truth that there was a balance by sea as well as by land. The growing preponderance of the English navy and of English commerce had long been seen with a jealous eye both in Spain and in France, and strong mutual interests drew the two countries together. The recovery of Gibraltar had since the Peace of Utrecht been a great object of Spanish policy, and Spain had lost, with her dominions in the Netherlands, her chief reason for desiring an English alliance and her chief cause of quarrel with France. In the counsels of the latter country a strong military party had appeared who protested against the pacific policy of Fleury, who maintained that French continental interests had been unduly sacrificed to England, and who desired to revive, in part at least, the policy of Lewis XIV. and to seek new combinations of power. This party was strengthened by the English treaty with the Emperor in 1731, which was regarded with some reason as the abandonment of a French for an Austrian alliance, and also by the great danger of an English declaration of war during the struggle of 1733. At the close of that year a secret treaty, called the

Family Compact, was signed by the Kings of France and Spain, with the object of guarding against the naval supremacy of England. By this treaty the French agreed, if necessary, to assist Spain in her efforts to extirpate the abuses which crept into her trade with England, and also to endeavour to procure for Spain the cession of Gibraltar; while Spain agreed, on a fitting occasion, to revoke the trade privileges of England and to admit France to a large share of her trans-Atlantic commerce.

This treaty was a profound secret, and was unknown both to Walpole and the Opposition, but there were several signs of a growing coldness between England and France. Chauvelin, who was Secretary of State for foreign affairs from 1727 to 1737, gradually acquired almost a complete empire over the mind of Fleury, and his influence was usually very hostile to the English alliance. In 1735 the English minister carried on a very secret negotiation with him, and endeavoured by the offer of a large bribe to win him to his interest; but the attempt does not appear to have been successful, and the disgrace and exile of Chauvelin, in the beginning of 1737, was regarded as a great triumph of English policy.[1] On sea France displayed a new activity, while Spain, secure in her secret alliance, grew more severe in enforcing the right of search against British sailors. The latter, who despised and hated the Spaniards as foreigners, as Papists, and as ancient enemies, appear to have continually acted with great insolence. The Spaniards in their turn retaliated by many acts of violence, which were studiously collected, aggravated, and circulated in England. One story especially produced a deep impression. An English captain named Jenkins was brought before Parliament and alleged that when sailing for Jamaica, so far back as 1731, he had been seized by Spanish sailors, tortured and deprived of his ears; and when he was asked what he thought when he found himself in the hands of such barbarians, he answered, in words which had doubtless been suggested to him, and which were soon repeated through the length and breadth of England, that 'he had recommended his soul to God and his cause to his country.'

[1] See the secret correspondence of the English Government, in Coxe's *Walpole*, iii. 308–309, 316, 317, 451–457.

The truth of the story is extremely doubtful, but the end that was aimed at was attained.[1] The indignation of the people, fanned as it was by the press and by the untiring efforts of all sections of the Opposition, became uncontrollable. Every device was employed to sustain it. English sailors returned from captivity in Spain were planted at the Exchange, exhibiting to the crowds who passed by, specimens of the loathsome food they were obliged to eat in the dungeons of Spain. Literature caught up the excitement, and it was reflected in the poetry of Pope, of Glover, and of Johnson. Walpole tried bravely and ably to moderate it, but his conduct was branded as the grossest pusillanimity. The King fully shared the popular sentiment. Petitions poured into Parliament from every part of the kingdom demanding redress; while Spain, relying on the letter of the treaty and on the support of France, met every overture with suspicion or arrogance. Strong resolutions were carried through both the Commons and Lords. Letters of marque and reprisal were offered to the merchants. Admiral Haddock was despatched with a fleet of ten ships to the Mediterranean, and troops were sent to the infant colony of Georgia to protect it from an apprehended invasion.

These events took place in 1738. It is a remarkable proof of the tact and influence of Walpole that, notwithstanding the fierce and warlike spirit in the country, in the Parliament and in the palace, notwithstanding the fact that in his own Cabinet both Newcastle and Hardwicke were advocates of war, the catastrophe did not take place till the November of the following year. It is clear that in the essential points of difference England was in the wrong. A plain treaty had been grossly and continually violated by English sailors. The right of search by which Spain attempted to enforce it, though often harshly and improperly exercised, was perfectly legal, and before the war was ended some of the noisiest of those who now denounced it were compelled to acknowledge the fact. Walpole himself had no doubt on the

[1] According to Horace Walpole, when Jenkins died it was found that his ear had never been cut off at all. According to Tindal, 'Jenkins lost his ear or part of his ear on another occasion, and pretended it had been cut off by a guarda costa.' See, for other details on this matter, Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 579–580. Burke called it 'the fable of Jenkins' ears.'—*Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

subject, but he tried in vain to convince the country. The House of Lords passed a resolution strongly condemning the right of search, and the people, prompted by the leaders of the Opposition and now fully excited, insisted upon its unqualified relinquishment. All that could be done was to negotiate about the many instances of gross and unwarrantable violence of which Spanish captains had been guilty. The country was full of accounts of English sailors who had been seized by the Spaniards, plundered of all they possessed, laden with chains in a tropical climate, imprisoned for long periods in unhealthy dungeons, tortured or consigned to the tender mercies of the Inquisition. In these accounts there was much exaggeration and not a little deliberate falsehood, but there was also a real basis of fact. After great difficulties, and by a combination of intimidation and address, Spain was induced to sign a convention regulating the outstanding accounts between the two nations and awarding to England as compensation a balance which was ultimately settled at 95,000*l*. No mention was made in this convention of the right of search, or of the punishment of the offending captains, and Spain was only induced to sign it, by England consenting to acknowledge a doubtful claim of compensation for Spanish ships that had been captured by Byng in 1718. It was soon, however, plain that this convention could not finally settle the differences between the two countries. Walpole succeeded, though with great difficulty, in carrying it through both Houses, and the Opposition, exasperated by his success, for a time seceded. In the country, however, the outcry was fierce and loud, and the Prince of Wales put himself at the head of the malcontents. The divisions of the Cabinet became more and more serious. The attitude of France towards England grew steadily hostile, and the language of Spain proportionately haughty. She threatened immediate reprisals upon the South Sea Company on account of an old debt which was alleged to be unpaid. She remonstrated, with an arrogance an English minister could hardly brook, against the presence of a British fleet in the Mediterranean. She reasserted in the strongest language that right of search which the English nation was resolved at all hazards to resist.

The Opposition had now succeeded in their design. War

had become inevitable; and Walpole, instead of retiring, as he should have done, declared it himself. 'They are ringing their bells now,' he exclaimed, as the joy bells pealed at the announcement, 'they will be wringing their hands soon.' It was in vain, however, that he had yielded to the clamour, for the long agony of his ministry had already begun. Supporter after supporter dropped away. The Duke of Argyle, the most powerful and eloquent of the Scottish chiefs, had gone into open opposition[1]; and his influence, combined with the irritation due to the repressive measures that followed the Porteous riots, produced at the next election, for the first time, a Scotch majority hostile to the minister. The Duke of Newcastle was moody, discontented, and uncertain. The authority of the minister in his Cabinet, and his majority in Parliament, steadily declined. The military organisation having fallen into decay during the long peace, the war was feebly and unsuccessfully conducted, and the commanders by land and sea were jealous and disunited. Anson plundered and burnt Paita, and captured a few Spanish prizes. Admiral Vernon took Porto Bello, but the capture was speedily relinquished; and Vernon, being a personal enemy of Walpole, his triumph rather weakened than strengthened the Government. With these exceptions, the first period of the war presented little more than a monotony of disaster. The repulse of an expedition against Carthagena, the abandonment of an expedition against Cuba, the destruction of many thousands of English soldiers and sailors by tropical fever, the inactivity of the British fleet in the Mediterranean, the rapid decline of British commerce, accompanied by severe distress at home—all contributed to the discontent. In the midst of these calamities, a new series of events began, which soon plunged the greater part of Europe into war. In October 1740 the Emperor Charles VI. died, after a very short illness, at the early age of fifty-five, leaving no son. For many years the great objects of his policy had been to bequeath his whole Austrian dominions to his daughter Maria Theresa, and to obtain for her husband the Duke of

[1] In a letter to Swift, 1734–5, Pulteney had noticed the steadiness with which the bishops and Scotch peers supported the ministry, and how formidable a body they were in the House of Lords.—Swift's *Correspondence*, iii. 120.

Tuscany, and former ruler of Lorraine, the Imperial crown. The latter object could, of course, only be attained when the vacancy occurred, and by the ordinary process of election; but in order to secure the former, Charles VI. had promulgated the law called the Pragmatic Sanction, regulating the succession, and had obtained a solemn assent to that law from the Germanic body, and from the great hereditary States of Europe. With so distinct and so recent a recognition of her title by all the great Powers of Europe, the young Archduchess, it was hoped, would have no difficulty in assuming the throne as Queen of Hungary and of the other hereditary dominions of her father, and she did so with the warm assent of her subjects. She was, however, a young and inexperienced woman, wholly unversed in public business, and at this time far advanced in pregnancy. Her dominions were threatened by the Turks from without, and corroded by serious dissensions within. Her army, exclusive of the troops in Italy and the Netherlands, amounted to only 30,000 men, and her whole treasure consisted of 100,000 florins, which were claimed by the Empress dowager.[1] All these circumstances might have moved generous natures in her favour, but they served only to stimulate the rapacity of her neighbours. The Elector of Bavaria had never signed the Pragmatic Sanction, and he laid claim to the Austrian throne on grounds which were demonstrably worthless. France had not only assented to, but even guaranteed, the Pragmatic Sanction; and Cardinal Fleury, who was at the head of affairs, would probably have kept his faith, but he was now a very old and vacillating man, and his hand was forced by Marshal Belleisle, who, at the head of a powerful body of French nobles, saw in the weakness of the young queen an opportunity of aggrandising France, and dismembering an ancient rival. Prussia also was a party to the Pragmatic Sanction; but Frederick II., who had just ascended the throne, was burdened with no scruples; he found himself at the head of an admirable army of 76,000 men, and was impatient to employ it in the plunder of his enfeebled neighbour.

The Elector of Bavaria refused to acknowledge the title of the Empress, but the first blow was struck by Frederick. That

[1] See Coxe's *House of Austria*.

he was moved to this course simply by the consciousness of his own great military strength, and of the weakness and disorganisation of the Empire; that he sought his own aggrandisement with circumstances of peculiar treachery, and with a clear knowledge that he was about to apply the spark to a powder magazine, and to involve the greater part of Europe in the horrors of war, are facts which remain intact after all the elaborate apologies that have been written in his favour. He was a man of singularly clear, vivid, and rapid judgment, admirably courageous in seizing perilous opportunities, and in encountering adversity; admirably energetic and indefatigable in raising to the highest point of efficiency all the details both of civil and military administration. Perfectly free from every tinge of religious bigotry, he was one of the most tolerant rulers of his age, and he was one of the first who, by abolishing torture in his dominions, introduced the principles of Beccaria into practical legislation. Though intensely avaricious of real power, and disposed to exercise a petty, meddling, and spiteful despotism in the smallest spheres,[1] he had nothing of the royal love for the pomp and trappings of majesty, nothing of the blind reverence for old forms and for old traditions, nothing of the childish cowardice which so often makes those who are born to the purple unable to hear unwelcome truths or to face unwelcome facts. Like Richelieu, the element of weakness in his character took the form of literary vanity, and of a feeble vein of literary sentimentality, but it never affected his active career. Unlike Napoleon, to whom in many respects he bore a striking resemblance, his faculties were always completely under his control; he was never intoxicated, either by the magnitude of his schemes or by the violence of his passions, and his shrewd, calculating intellect remained unclouded through all the vicissitudes of fortune. He was at the same time hard and selfish to the core, and without a spark of generosity or of honour. His one object was the aggrandisement of the territory over which he ruled. Of patriotism, in the higher and more disinterested sense of the word, he had little or nothing. All his natural leanings of mind and disposition were French, and few

[1] See some very curious illustrations of this in the letters of Sir Hanbury Williams from Berlin. Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. pp. 452–461.

men appear to have had less appreciation of the nobler aspects of the German character, or of the dawning splendour of the German intellect. His own words, describing the motives of his first war, have been often cited: 'Ambition, interest, the desire of making men talk about me, carried the day, and I decided for war.'

It was not difficult, in the confused and intricate field of German politics, to find pretexts for aggression, and Prussia had one real reason to complain of the conduct of the Empire. One of her most ardent desires was to obtain for herself the succession to the little Duchies of Juliers and Berg. They had passed in 1675 under the sceptre of the Neuberg branch of the Palatine Electoral family, but the reigning Elector Palatine was the last sovereign of that branch, and the succession was claimed by the Prussian sovereigns, and also by the Sulzbach branch of the Palatine family. After much secret negotiation, a compromise was arrived at. Frederick William, who was then King of Prussia, restricted his demand to the possession of Berg; and he made it a condition of the recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction that the Emperor should assist him in obtaining the succession. The treaty was made, but it was speedily broken. The Elector Palatine ardently desired the succession for the Sulzbach branch of his family; and all Catholic Germany looked upon Dusseldorf as an essential frontier fortress against Protestant aggression. It was probable that the Prussian claims could only be enforced by arms, and that France would resent any considerable aggrandisement of Prussia on the Rhine. These and other considerations of German politics threw the Emperor Charles VI. decidedly on the side of the Palatine Succession, and in conjunction with the other great European Powers, he even urged that the Duchy should be provisionally garrisoned by troops belonging to the Sulzbach branch until a European arbitration had decided the disputed succession. Whatever might be the rights of the question of succession, Frederick William considered with reason that the Emperor had broken faith with him, and he speedily opened secret negotiations with France. French statesmen seldom lost an opportunity of obtaining an ally or an influence in Germany, and a secret alliance was ultimately concluded by which they undertook to sup-

port the claims of Prussia to a portion of the Duchy, excluding, however, Dusseldorf, the capital.[1]

This was a real ground of difference. The claims of Prussia to the greater part of the Austrian province of Silesia were of a much more flimsy description. The Duchy of Jägerndorf had once been in the possession of a collateral branch of the House of Brandenburg, which had been deprived of it, it was alleged unjustly, in 1623, and Frederick claimed the territory as lineal descendant, though it had remained undisturbed in Austrian hands for more than a century. It is plain that by the application of such a principle the security of Europe might be at any moment destroyed, for there is no State which has not at some distant period gained or lost territory by acts of at least disputable justice. The Duchies of Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlan were claimed on somewhat more complicated grounds. About 1635 a family compact had been made between Frederick, who then governed them as Duke, and the Elector Joachim II., Duke of Brandenburg, providing that in the event of the failure of the male issue of either sovereign, his territory was to pass to the descendants of the other. Ferdinand I., King of Bohemia, who was the feudal lord, refused to recognise this compact, and its validity was in consequence very doubtful; and when in 1675 the ducal house of Liegnitz became extinct, Austria took possession of the territory, and the Elector of Brandenburg was soon after induced to renounce for himself and his descendants all claim to its possession. Frederick maintained this renunciation to be invalid, and he claimed by virtue of the original compact.[2]

These, however, were mere pretexts for a course of conduct which was decided on very different grounds. With consummate address, and with consummate baseness, Frederick lulled the suspicions of the young Queen to rest by professions of the warmest friendship till his army was on the eve of marching. He made no alliance, but just before starting for the war he said significantly to the French ambassador, 'I am going, I believe, to play your game, and if I should throw doublets, we

[1] See the details of this negotiation in Ranke's *Hist. of Prussia.*

[2] The original statements of the causes of the war both on the Prussian and Austrian side are given at length in the *Histoire de la Dernière Guerre de Bohême*, par D. M. V. L. N. (Amsterdam, 1756).

will share the stake.'[1] Without making any demands, or stating any conditions, without any previous notice, or any declaration of war, he suddenly poured 30,000 soldiers into Silesia, which was plunged in the security of profound peace, and left almost wholly destitute of troops. Then, and not till then, he apprised Maria Theresa of his designs, and offered, if she would cede to him the whole Lower Duchy which he had invaded, to defend her title to the Austrian throne.[2] The offer was rejected as an insult, and the whole province was overrun by Prussian soldiers. Breslau and several minor towns were captured, and an army which marched from Moravia, under Marshal Neipperg, to the rescue of Silesia was defeated at the great battle of Molwitz. The signal was given, and from every side the wolves rushed upon their prey. France had at first duped the Queen of Hungary by false and treacherous assurances, but she now flung off the mask, espoused the cause of the Elector of Bavaria, and with that Power entered into the war. The Kings of Spain and of Sardinia and the Elector of Saxony laid claims to portions of the Austrian dominions, and proposed openly or secretly to dismember them. In June 1741 a treaty was signed between France and Prussia, and by the end of October the fortunes of Austria appeared desperate. Silesia was irrecoverably gone. Moravia was invaded by the Prussians. Bohemia was overrun by a united army of French and Bavarians; Vienna was seriously menaced; Linz and Passau were taken; the capture of Prague soon followed, and, before the close of the year, the Elector of Bavaria was crowned King of Bohemia.

The Queen of Hungary, however, presented an inflexible front to her enemies. Driven from Vienna she threw herself on the loyalty of her Hungarian subjects, who received her with an enthusiasm that dispelled every hesitation from her mind, and she urgently called on those Powers which had accepted the Pragmatic Sanction, guaranteeing her succession to the whole Austrian dominions, to assist her in her struggle. Of these Powers, France, Prussia, Spain, and Poland, whose sovereign was the Elector of Saxony, had combined to plunder her. Russia,

[1] Gotter, who was sent on this message, arrived at Vienna two days after the Prussians had entered Silesia.—Frederick, *Mém. de Mon Temps*.

[2] Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XV.* ch. 6.

chiefly by French intrigues, was embroiled in war with Sweden. The Dutch desired above all things to avoid the conflict. In England the feeling of the King, of the people, and of Newcastle and Hardwicke, was in favour of war; but Walpole strained every nerve to maintain peace. In addition to his constitutional and very honourable hatred of war he had many special reasons. He clearly foresaw from the first, what Maria Theresa refused till the last moment to believe, that the French were secretly meditating the dismemberment of Austria, and he was therefore anxious at all costs to put an end to the war between Austria and Prussia. Besides this, England was already at war with Spain, and a French war would probably lead to a Jacobite insurrection. Walpole urgently, but vainly, laboured to induce the Queen of Hungary to propitiate Frederick by the cession of the whole or part of Silesia, to induce Frederick, through fear of the ascendancy of France, to secede from the confederation, and, having failed in both objects, he was dragged reluctantly into the war. In April 1741 the King's speech called upon Parliament to aid him in maintaining the Pragmatic Sanction, and a subsidy of 300,000*l.* to the Queen of Hungary was voted. In the following month the King, in spite of the remonstrances of Walpole, went over to Hanover to organise a mixed army of English and German troops, but a French army passed the Meuse, and marched rapidly upon Hanover, and the King, scared by the threatened invasion of his Principality, concluded, in his capacity of Elector, without consulting or even informing his English ministers, a treaty pledging Hanover to neutrality for a year. Ever since the accession of the House of Brunswick, Hanover had been a perpetual source of embarrassment and danger to England, but a German war was one of the very few contingencies in which its alliance was of some real value. The indignation excited in England by the treaty of neutrality was in consequence very violent, and nearly at the same time the news arrived that 15,000 Spanish troops, under the protection of a French squadron, had sailed from Barcelona, in spite of the neighbourhood of a British fleet, to attack the Austrian dominions in Italy.

Many of these faults and misfortunes can in no degree be

ascribed to Walpole. Many of them were, in fact, the direct consequence of the abandonment of his policy; but in the mood in which the nation then was, they all contributed to his unpopularity. He was, in fact, emphatically a peace minister, and even had it been otherwise, no minister can command the requisite national enthusiasm if he is conducting a war of which he notoriously disapproves. There are few pictures more painful or humiliating than are presented by the last few months of his power. He had lived so long in office, and he had so few other tastes, that he clung to it with a desperate tenacity. His private fortune was disordered. He knew that his fall would be followed by an impeachment, and he had none of the magnanimity of virtue that has supported some statesmen under the ingratitude of nations, and has enabled them to look forward with confidence to the verdict of posterity. Once, it is true, he placed his resignation in the hands of the King, who desired him to continue in office, and he consented too readily for his fame. He encountered the opposition within Parliament, and the obloquy without, with a courage that never flinched, but he felt that the end was drawing near, and his old buoyancy of spirits was gone. 'He who in former years,' wrote his son, 'was asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow ... now never sleeps above an hour without waking; and he who at dinner always forgot he was minister, and was more gay and thoughtless than all his company, now sits without speaking, and with his eyes fixed, for an hour together.'[1] He met a motion for his removal, which was brought forward by Sandys, with a speech of consummate power, and the secession of Shippen and his followers gave him on this occasion the victory. He tried in vain to detach the Prince of Wales from the Opposition by inducing the King to offer him the increase of his allowance which he had long desired. He tried to crush Pitt by depriving him of his commission in the army. He even tried at one time to win a few Jacobite votes by an insincere and futile overture to the Pretender.[2] The great frost at the close of 1739 added seriously to his difficulties by the distress and the discontent it produced. The harvest that followed

[1] To Sir H. Mann. Oct. 19, 1741.

[2] See the account of this very curious overture (which was made in 1739 through the medium of Carte, the historian) in Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, iii. pp. 23-24.

was miserably bad. Bread rose almost to famine price. Bakers' shops were broken open, and fierce riots took place in many parts of England. The people were angry, sullen, and wretched, and quite disposed to make the minister responsible for their sufferings. At the moment when his unpopularity was at its height the period for a dissolution of Parliament arrived. The feelings of the people could not be doubted, but party connections, borough influence, and a lavish expenditure of secret-service money might still protract his rule, and all three were strained to the uttermost. An unforeseen circumstance appears to have turned the scale. An injudicious and hasty interference of some soldiers in a riot that took place at the Westminster election, though Walpole was certainly wholly unconcerned in it, was made the basis of an absurd and malignant report that the ministers were attempting to coerce the voters by military force, and the indignation thus aroused affected several elections. When Parliament met, in the beginning of December 1741, Walpole had only a bare majority, and after eight weeks of fierce and factious wrangling, being defeated on January 28 on a question relating to an election petition, he resigned.[1]

He had already provided, with his usual caution, for his fall. In the course of his ministry he had bestowed upon his sons permanent offices, chiefly sinecures, amounting in all to about 15,000*l.* a-year,[2] and had obtained the title of Baron for his eldest son, and the Orders of the Bath and of the Garter for himself. He now procured for himself the title of Earl of Orford, and a pension of 4,000*l.* a-year, and for his illegitimate daughter the rank and precedence of an Earl's daughter. He is said, many years before, to have disarmed the animosity of Shippen by saving from punishment a Jacobite friend of that statesman; and he endeavoured in vain to avert an impeachment by inducing the King to offer Pulteney the chief place in the Government on the condition that he would save his predecessor from prosecution. The King, though he had always

[1] See the graphic account of this last struggle in H. Walpole's letters to Sir H. Mann. Glover asserts in his Memoirs that the Prince of Wales assured him that the last votes against Walpole cost the Opposition 12,000*l.*

[2] See the list in Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 730-731, and Horace Walpole's Memoir of his own income in *Walpole's Life and Letters* (ed. Cunningham) vol. i.

disliked the peace policy of his minister, acted towards him with a fidelity that has not been sufficiently appreciated; strained all his influence for his protection, and even burst into tears when parting with him. To the mass of the nation, however, the fall of Walpole was the signal of the wildest rejoicing. It was believed that the reign of corruption had at last ended; that triennial parliaments would be restored; that standing armies would be abolished in time of peace; that a new energy would be infused into the conduct of the war; that all pensioners would be excluded from Parliament; that the number of placemen would be strictly limited. Statesmen observed with concern the great force which the democratic element in the country had almost silently acquired during the long and pacific ministry of Walpole. The increasing numbers and wealth of the trading classes, the growth of the great towns, the steady progress of the press, and the discredit which corruption had brought upon the Parliament, had all contributed to produce a spirit beyond the walls of the Legislature such as had never before been shown, except when ecclesiastical interests were concerned. Political agitation assumed new dimensions, and doctrines about the duty of representatives subordinating their judgments to those of their electors, which had scarcely been heard in England since the Commonwealth, were freely expressed. A very able political writer, who had been an ardent opponent of Walpole, but who was much terrified at the aspect the country had assumed upon his fall, has left us a lively picture of what he termed 'the republican spirit that had so strangely arisen.' He notices as a new and curious fact the 'instructions' drawn up by some of the electors of London, of Westminster, and several other cities to their representatives, prescribing the measures that were required, and asserting or implying 'that it was the duty of every Member of Parliament to vote in every instance as his constituents should direct him in the House of Commons,' contrary to 'the constant and allowed principle of our Constitution that no man, after he is chosen, is to consider himself as a member for any particular place, but as a representative for the whole nation.' He complains that 'the views of the popular interest, inflamed, distracted, and misguided as it has been of late, are such as they

were never imagined to have been;' that 'a party of malcontents, assuming to themselves, though very falsely, the title of the People, claim with it a pretension which no people could have a right to claim, of creating themselves into a new order in the State, affecting a superiority to the whole Legislature, insolently taking upon them to dictate to all the three estates, in which the absolute power of the Government, by all the laws of this country, has indisputably resided ever since it was a Government, and endeavouring in effect to animate the people to resume into their own hands that vague and loose authority which exists (unless in theory) in the people of no country upon earth, and the inconvenience of which is so obvious that it is the first step of mankind, when formed into society, to divest themselves of it, and to delegate it for ever from themselves.'[1]

In these movements of public opinion we may clearly trace the conditions that rendered possible the career of Pitt. On the present occasion, however, they were doomed to a speedy disappointment. Petitions poured into Westminster, and for a time Pulteney was the object of a popularity such as few English politicians have ever enjoyed. But in a few days the prospect was overclouded. Statesmen of the most opposite parties had concurred for the purpose of hurling Walpole from power; but when they succeeded, their disunion was at once apparent, and the hollowness of their pretensions to purity was exposed. Pulteney fulfilled his rash pledge of not taking office, but, by a fatal error of judgment, he accepted the earldom of Bath, as well as a seat in the Cabinet, and his influence was irrevocably destroyed.[2] He lost all credit with the nation for disinterestedness. He was removed from the House of Commons, which he might have led, and his attempts to exercise a controlling direction over affairs without accepting the responsibility of office utterly failed. The King, it is said, indignant at his conduct, at first shrank from giving him the peerage which in the course of his career he had already three times refused, but the old

[1] *Faction Detected by the Evidence of Facts.* This very remarkable pamphlet (which went through many editions) has been ascribed to Lord Egmont.

[2] His intentions appear to have been known before the fall of Walpole. Sir R. Wilmot, in a letter to the Duke of Devonshire, Jan. 12, 1741–2, said: 'Pulteney's terms seem to be a peerage, and a place in the Cabinet Council, if he can get it.'—Coxe's *Walpole*, iii. 587.

minister, perceiving clearly the error of his rival, persuaded his master to yield. 'I have turned the key of the Cabinet on him,' he exclaimed, with a significant gesture, and he soon afterwards greeted him with mock gravity in the House of Lords, 'Here we are, my Lord, the two most insignificant men in the kingdom.' Pulteney, indeed, was utterly overwhelmed by the reproaches of the Tories, by the poignant satires of Sir Hanbury Williams, and by the execration of the people. For years he had discharged the easy task of criticising abuses which he was not called upon to remedy. He had made himself the great adversary of all corrupt influence, the idol of all who aspired to reform, but no sooner had the hour for action arrived than he shrank ignobly from the helm. Henceforth his political life was a wretched tissue of disappointed hopes. He tried in vain to grasp the reins of power on the death of Lord Wilmington. He tried to assist Carteret in forming an administration in 1746. He declared himself in the next reign a supporter of the Tory Bute, but he never again enjoyed either popular or royal favour. In a few years he was powerless and almost forgotten. He had always loved money too much, and under the influence of age and disappointment this failing is said to have deepened into an avarice not less sordid than that which had clouded the noble faculties of Marlborough.

Walpole also, or, to give him his new title, Orford, soon disappeared from the scene, but his influence endured to the last. For a time his life seemed in imminent danger. The cry of the people for his blood was fierce and general, and politicians of most parties had pledged themselves to impeach him. It soon, however, appeared that, with the exception of Pitt, Chesterfield, and the Duke of Argyle, no man of importance was anxious to push matters to extremity, while many and various influences favoured him. Those who had come in immediate contact with him could hardly be wholly insensible to his many great qualities and to the eminent services he had rendered to the country and the dynasty. The King and House of Lords were warmly in his favour. The Prince of Wales was reconciled to him. Newcastle, though he had often quarrelled with him, was anxious for many reasons to shield him, and negotiated with great tact to prevent the complete triumph of his ene-

mies.[1] Pulteney was alarmed at the sudden impulse given to the Jacobite party, and at the loud cry for the suppression of the standing army, which might, if it succeeded, be fatal to the dynasty, and it was impossible to form an administration without including a considerable section of the former Government. Besides this, corrupt influence had pervaded all parties. No party sincerely wished to change the system, and therefore all parties shrank from exposing it. Walpole was compelled, indeed, to relinquish his pension, which two years after he resumed, and Pulteney was reluctantly obliged to urge on his impeachment, but, as might have been expected, it was without result. Carteret himself took a leading part in the House of Lords in opposing the Bill granting indemnity to those who gave evidence against Walpole, and the blunders of the new ministers, if they did not restore the popularity of the fallen statesman, at least speedily diverted into new channels the indignation of the people.

He retained his influence with the King to the last, and he used it successfully to divide his adversaries, to perpetuate the exclusion of the Tory party, and to bring the Pelhams into the forefront. He died in 1745, after great suffering, which he bore with great courage. 'A few days before he died,' writes his biographer, 'the Duke of Cumberland, who had ineffectually remonstrated with the King against a marriage with the Princess of Denmark, who was deformed, sent his governor, Mr. Poyntz, to consult the Earl of Orford on the best methods which he could adopt to avoid the match. After a moment's reflection, Orford (who was well aware of the penurious character of the King) advised him to give his consent to the marriage on condition of receiving an ample and immediate establishment, 'and believe me,' he added, 'when I say the match will be no longer pressed.' The Duke followed the advice, and the event happened as the dying statesman had foretold.'[2]

The political changes which immediately followed the retirement of Walpole may be speedily dismissed. For several years they consisted chiefly of the antagonism of Carteret and Pul-

[1] Coxe's *Pelham.* Introd. sec. 3.

[2] Coxe's *Walpole,* i. 743. See, too, Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* vol. i. p. 105.

teney with the Pelhams. Pulteney, as I have said, though accepting a seat in the Cabinet, at first declined office, but at his desire the Earl of Wilmington, the old colleague of Walpole and a man of the most moderate intelligence, became the nominal head of the Government. He had broken away from Walpole on the question of the Spanish war, but was otherwise thoroughly identified with the former Government. Carteret obtained the Secretaryship of State for the Northern Department, which involved the direction of foreign affairs. Newcastle occupied the corresponding post in home affairs; his brother, Henry Pelham, was Paymaster of the Forces, and Lord Hardwicke continued to be Chancellor. With two or three exceptions the Tories were still excluded from office, as were also Chesterfield and Pitt, who were personally displeasing to the King, and the offices of the Government were divided in tolerably fair proportions between the followers of the great Whig leaders and the personal adherents of the Prince of Wales. In spite of all the clamour that had been raised about the abuses under Walpole, the system of home government continued essentially the same. The Septennial Act was maintained against every attack; and if there was a little more decorum in the government, there was probably quite as much corruption.

The foreign policy of the Government, however, gained considerably in energy, and the change was but one of many circumstances that favoured Maria Theresa. We have already seen that by October 1741 her fortunes had sunk to the lowest ebb, but a great revulsion speedily set in. The martial enthusiasm of the Hungarians, the subsidy from England, and the brilliant military talents of General Khevenhüller, restored her armies. Vienna was put in a state of defence, and at the same time jealousies and suspicion made their way among the confederates. The Electors of Bavaria and Saxony were already in some degree divided; and the Germans, and especially Frederick, were alarmed by the growing ascendancy, and irritated by the haughty demeanour of the French. In the moment of her extreme depression, the Queen consented to a concession which England had vainly urged upon her before, and which laid the foundation of her future success. In October 1741 she entered

into a secret convention with Frederick, by which that astute sovereign agreed to desert his allies, and desist from hostilities, on condition of ultimately obtaining Lower Silesia, with Breslau and Neisse. Every precaution was taken to ensure secrecy. It was arranged that Frederick should continue to besiege Neisse, that the town should ultimately be surrendered to him, and that his troops should then retire into winter quarters, and take no further part in the war. As the sacrifice of a few more lives was perfectly indifferent to the contracting parties, and in order that no one should suspect the treachery that was contemplated, Neisse, after the arrangement had been made for its surrender, was subjected for four days and four nights to the horrors of bombardment. Frederick at the same time talked, with his usual cynical frankness, to the English ambassador about the best way of attacking his allies the French; and observed, that if the Queen of Hungary prospered, he would perhaps support her, if not—everyone must look for himself.[1] He only assented verbally to this convention, and, no doubt, resolved to await the course of events, in order to decide which Power it was his interest finally to betray; but in the meantime the Austrians obtained a respite, which enabled them to throw their whole forces upon their other enemies. Two brilliant campaigns followed. The greater part of Bohemia was recovered by an army under the Duke of Lorraine, and the French were hemmed in at Prague; while another army, under General Khevenhuller, invaded Upper Austria, drove 10,000 French soldiers within the walls of Linz, blockaded them, defeated a body of Bohemians who were sent to the rescue, compelled the whole French army to surrender, and then, crossing the frontier, poured in a resistless torrent over Bavaria. The fairest plains of that beautiful land were desolated by hosts of irregular troops from Hungary, Croatia, and the Tyrol; and on the 12th of February the Austrians marched in triumph into Munich. On that very day the Elector of Bavaria was crowned Emperor of Germany, at Frankfort, under the title of Charles VII., and the imperial crown was thus, for the first time, for many generations, separated from the House of Austria.

The wheel again turned. Frederick witnessed with great

[1] See Carlyle's *Frederick*, book xiii. ch. 5.

alarm the rapid success of the Austrians; he concluded, probably with some reason, that if they advanced further he would never obtain the cession for which he had stipulated, and he complained also that the secret of his truce had not been strictly kept. He accordingly broke the convention, united himself again with the new Emperor, and entered Moravia. The town of Glatz was besieged and taken, and after several indecisive skirmishes and several abortive negotiations, the fortune of the war was decided by a great battle at Czaslau, or Chotusitz, in Bohemia. The Austrians were commanded by Prince Charles of Lorraine; the Prussians by Frederick in person. The result was a great Prussian victory. The Austrians were driven back, with the loss of 18 cannon and about 7,000 men.

Both parties now sincerely desired peace. Frederick foresaw the dangers of a complete French ascendancy in Germany, and his army was seriously weakened. The Austrians had retired in good order at Czaslau. The Prussian losses were but little inferior to those of the enemy, and their cavalry had been almost annihilated. On the other hand, it appeared evident that the intervention or non-intervention of Prussia decided the fortunes of the war, and it was probable that the French, unless speedily checked, would regain their ascendancy in Bohemia. These considerations, aided by the active good offices of England, led to the Peace of Breslau, by which Austria ceded to Prussia all Lower and the greater part of Upper Silesia as well as the country about Glatz, while Frederick on his part ceased from all hostility, withdrew his troops from the French army, and acknowledged the Pragmatic Sanction. The preliminaries of this peace were signed on June 11, and the definitive peace was accepted on July 28, 1742. The Elector of Saxony also acceded to it, and availed himself of the opportunity of withdrawing from the war.

The conditions of the contest were thus profoundly altered. The first consequence was the almost complete expulsion of the French from Bohemia. Suddenly deserted by their allies, outnumbered by their enemies, and wasted by sickness and by famine, they were driven from place to place, and the whole army was at last blockaded in Prague. An army sent to its relief under the command of Maillebois, was repulsed and com-

pelled to fall back on Bavaria, and the surrender of the French appeared inevitable. This fate was averted by the masterly strategy of Belleisle, who succeeded, in the midst of a dark December night, in evading the Austrians, and who conducted the bulk of his army unbroken for a twelve days' march over a waste of ice and snow and through the midst of a hostile country. They had no covering by night and no subsistence except frozen bread, and they were harassed at every step by the enemy. Hundreds died through cold and hardship. The roads were strewn with human bodies stiffening in the frost, but every cannon and banner was brought in safety to Eger, a frontier town of Bohemia, which was still in the hands of the French. Prague held out a little longer, but it soon succumbed. The French commander declared that unless he obtained honourable terms he would burn the city, and in order to save the capital of Bohemia, the French garrison of 6,000 men were suffered to march out with the honours of war, and to join their comrades at Eger. On Jan. 2, Belleisle began his homeward march, and the campaign had been so deadly that of 40,000 men who had invaded Germany only 8,000 recrossed the Rhine. Fleury, who had been dragged into a war which he had never desired and which he was unfit to conduct, had already vainly sued for peace. His overtures were spurned; and the Austrian Government, in order to sow dissension among its enemies, published the letter he had written. His long life had been for the most part upright, honourable, and useful; and if he assented in his last years to acts which were grossly criminal, history will readily forgive faults which were due to the weakness of extreme old age. He died in January in his ninetieth year. In May, 1743, Maria Theresa was crowned in Prague.

The effects of the change of government in England were felt in almost every quarter. Carteret at once sent Maria Theresa the assurance of his full support, and a new energy was infused into the war. The struggle between England and Spain had altogether merged in the great European war, and the chief efforts of the Spaniards were directed against the Austrian dominions in Italy. The kingdom of Naples, which had passed under Austrian rule during the war of the Succession, had, as we have seen, been restored to the Spanish line in the war

which ended in 1740, and Don Carlos, who ruled it was altogether subservient to Spanish policy. The Duke of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was sovereign of Tuscany; and the Austrian possessions consisted of the Duchy of Milan, and the provinces of Mantua and Plaçentia. They were garrisoned at the opening of the war by only 15,000 men, and their most dangerous enemy was the King of Sardinia, who had gradually extended his dominions into Lombardy, and whose army was, probably, the largest and most efficient in Italy. 'The Milanese,' his father is reported to have said, 'is like an artichoke, to be eaten leaf by leaf,' and the skill and perseverance with which for many generations the House of Savoy pursued that policy, have in our own day had their reward. Spanish troops had landed at Naples as early as November 1741. The King of Sardinia, the Prince of Modena, and the Republic of Genoa were on the same side. Venice was completely neutral, Tuscany was compelled to declare herself so, and a French army was soon to cross the Alps. The King of Sardinia, however, at this critical moment, was alarmed by the ambitious projects openly avowed by the Spaniards, and he was induced by English influence to change sides. He obtained the promise of certain territorial concessions from Austria, and of an annual subsidy of 200,000*l.* from England; and on these conditions he suddenly marched with an army of 30,000 men to the support of the Austrians. All the plans of the confederates were disconcerted by this defection. The Spaniards went into winter quarters near Bologna in October, fought an unsuccessful battle at Campo Santo in the following February, and then retired to Rimini, leaving Lombardy in complete tranquillity. The British fleet in the Mediterranean had been largely strengthened by Carteret, and it did good service to the cause. It burnt a Spanish squadron in the French port of St. Tropez, compelled the King of Naples, by the threat of bombardment, to withdraw his troops from the Spanish army, and sign an engagement of neutrality, destroyed large provisions of corn collected by the Genoese for the Spanish army, and cut off that army from all communications by sea.

The same good fortune attended the Austrians in every field. In the north, Russia was completely victorious over the Swedes, and the war was terminated by the Peace of Abo in August 1743.

A defensive alliance, concluded between Elizabeth of Russia and George II. of England, materially diminished the influence of France in the north of Europe, and a considerable sum was sent from Russia to the Queen of Hungary as a pledge of her active support. In May 1743 Bavaria, which had been reoccupied by its sovereign the Emperor in the October of the preceding year, was again invaded, and it was soon completely subjugated. Six thousand Bavarians, with their baggage, standards, and cannons, were captured at Erblach. A French army under Broglio was driven beyond the Rhine. Another French army was expelled from the Upper Palatinate. Eger, the last Bohemian post occupied by the French, was blockaded, and in September it fell. The unhappy Emperor fled hastily from Munich, and being defeated on all sides, and having no hope of assistance, he signed a treaty of neutrality by which he renounced all pretensions to the Austrian succession, and yielded his hereditary dominions to the Queen of Hungary, till the conclusion of a general peace. His army was withdrawn to Franconia, and he himself retired to Frankfort.

The Peace of Breslau had been chiefly the work of Carteret,[1] and he displayed equal zeal in urging the Dutch into the war. This object was at last so far accomplished that they very reluctantly consented to send a contingent to a great confederate army which was being formed in Flanders, under the direction of England and the command of the Earl of Stair, for the purpose of acting against the French, and, if possible, of invading France. It ultimately consisted of some 44,000 men, and was composed of about an equal number of British and Hanoverian soldiers, of 6,000 Hessians, in English pay, and of a contingent of Austrians and of Dutch. It started from Flanders in February 1742–43, marched slowly through the bishopric of Liége, where it was joined by the Austrians, under the Duke of Ahremberg, and by 16,000 Hanoverians in British pay, crossed the Rhine on May 14, and encamped on the 23rd in the neighbourhood of Frankfort. It was, however, soon after hemmed in by a superior French force under Noailles. The defiles above Aschaffenburg and the posts

[1] Frederick, *Hist. de mon Temps*, ch. vii.

of the Upper Maine were occupied by the French. The allies were out-manœuvred and cut off from succours, and their difficulty in obtaining provisions was so great that a capitulation seemed not improbable. Under these disastrous circumstances, George II., accompanied by the Duke of Cumberland and Carteret, joined the army. A great battle was fought at Dettingen, on June 27, and the bravery of the allied forces and the rashness of the Duke of Grammont, which disconcerted the plans of Noailles, gave the victory to the confederates, extricated the army from its embarrassments, and compelled the French to recross the Maine. No other important consequences followed. Innumerable divisions paralysed the army. The King of Prussia showed hostile intentions. The other German princes were divided in their views. The Dutch discouraged all prosecution of the war, and the allied forces after successively occupying Hanau, Worms, and Spire, at last retired to winter quarters in Flanders. A deadly hostility had sprung up between the British and the Hanoverian troops, and public opinion at home was now violently opposed to Carteret and to the war.

This great revulsion of feeling is to be ascribed to many causes. The war I am describing was one of the most tangled and complicated upon record, but amidst all its confused episodes and various objects, one great change was apparent. It had been a war for the maintenance of the Pragmatic Sanction and of the integrity of Austria. It had become a war for the conquest and dismemberment of France. Few sovereigns have been more deeply injured than Maria Theresa, and her haughty, ambitious, and somewhat vindictive nature, now flushed with a succession of conquests, was burning to retaliate upon her enemies. She desired to deprive the Emperor of the imperial crown, and to place it on the head of her husband, to annex Bavaria permanently to the Austrian dominions, to wrest Alsace and Lorraine from France, and Naples from the Spanish line; and if it was in her power she would undoubtedly have attempted to recover Silesia. Her impracticable temper and her ambitious views had become the chief obstacle to the pacification of Europe. She had scornfully rejected the overtures of Fleury for peace. She refused, in spite of the remonstrances of England, to grant

the Emperor a definite peace, although he asked only the recognition of his perfectly legal title as Emperor of Germany, and the security of his old hereditary dominions. She long refused to grant the King of Sardinia the concessions that had been promised, and it was not until a whole summer had been wasted, and until the King had threatened to go over to her enemies, that she consented, in September 1743, to sign the Treaty of Worms. By this treaty she at last relinquished in his favour her pretensions to the Marquisate of Finale, which was then in the possession of the Genoese, ceded Placentia and some small districts in Austrian Italy, and made an offensive alliance with the King for the prosecution of the war. Her present object was the invasion of France by two great armies, that of Prince Charles, which was massed upon the frontiers of Alsace, and that of the confederates, who had taken up their quarters at Hanau and Worms. England had gone far in supporting her in this policy, but it was open to the very gravest objections. It was one thing to fulfil the obligations of a distinct treaty and to prevent the dismemberment of an Empire, which was essential to the balance of power. It was quite another thing to support Austria in projects of aggrandisement which alarmed all the conservative instincts of Europe, and could only be realised by a long, bloody, and expensive war. England had entered into the struggle as a mere auxiliary and for a definite purpose, and her mission might reasonably be looked upon as fulfilled. Silesia had, it is true, been ceded to Prussia, but both the Emperor and France would have been perfectly willing to accept a peace leaving the Queen of Hungary in undisturbed possession of all the remainder of the Austrian dominions. It was maintained, and surely with reason, that England should have insisted on the acceptance of such a peace, and that if she could not induce Maria Theresa to acquiesce, she should at least herself have withdrawn from the war.[1] She had not done so. She had, on the contrary, plunged more and more deeply into Continental affairs. By the Treaty of Worms she bound herself to continue the subsidy of the King of Sardinia. She was still paying Austrian troops, and a secret convention bind-

[1] See these arguments powerfully stated in a speech by Pitt, Dec. 1, 1743 (*Anecdotes of Chatham*, vol. i.).

ing her to continue the subsidy to the Queen of Hungary, 'as long as the war should continue, or the necessity of her affairs should require,' as well as a project for bestowing a subsidy on the Emperor, on condition of his joining the Austrians against his allies the French, had both been recently proposed by Carteret and the King, and had only been defeated by the Pelham influence at home. The army of Flanders was an English creation, and most of its soldiers were either English or in English pay. By forming it, England had completely abandoned the wise policy of confining herself as much as possible to maritime warfare, and she had also, in direct opposition to the wishes of the Dutch, added very seriously to the dangers of the war by gratuitously attracting it towards the Dutch barrier.

But that which made the war most unpopular was the alleged subordination of English to Hanoverian interests. On no other subject was English public opinion so sensitive, and the orators of the Opposition exerted all their powers to inflame the feeling. The invective of Pitt, who declared that 'it was now too apparent that this great, this powerful, this formidable kingdom is considered only as a province to a despicable Electorate;' the sarcasm of Chesterfield, who suggested that the one effectual method of destroying Jacobitism would be to bestow Hanover on the Pretender, as the English people would never again tolerate a ruler from that country; the bitter witticism of a popular pamphleteer,[1] who, alluding to the white horse in the arms of Hanover, selected for his motto the text in the Revelation, 'I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed,' only represented in an emphatic form the common sentiment both of the army and of the people. The English and Hanoverians who fought side by side at Dettingen, probably hated each other more intensely than they hated the French, and the alleged partiality of the King to the Hanoverians even led to the angry resignation of Lord Stair.

It is impossible to doubt that amid much misrepresentation and exaggeration there was some real ground of complaint, and that England, as was said, was too often 'steered by a Hanoverian rudder.' As the sovereign of a small Continental state con-

[1] Dr. Shebbear.

stantly exposed to French ambition, as a German prince keenly interested in German politics, and especially anxious to have no superior in Germany except the Emperor, George II. had a far stronger interest in desiring, at one time the invasion and dismemberment of France, and at another the repression of the growing power of Prussia, than he could have had as a mere sovereign of England. The Electorate lay nearest his heart. Hanoverian interests undoubtedly coloured his foreign policy, and he had a strong disposition to employ the resources of his kingdom in the interests of his Electorate. The manner in which in the former reign England had been embroiled with both Sweden and Russia on account of Bremen and Verden, the Treaty of Hanover, the exaggerated German subsidies which had followed it, and the undoubted fact that many of those subsidies were rendered necessary only by the position of Hanover, had already produced a jealousy which the events of the new war greatly increased. The treaty of neutrality was regarded as a disgraceful abandonment, and the prolongation of the war, the attempted multiplication of German subsidies, and the too frequent custom of taking important resolutions, affecting England, on the Continent with little or no consultation with the English ministers, were all cited as examples of the partiality of the King. The most flagrant case, however, was his determination to throw the chief expense of the Hanoverian army, in time of war, upon England. After the Treaty of Breslau he declared his intention of reducing the Hanoverian army to its peace footing, as his German dominions were then unmolested, and the expense was too great for their resources, and his ministers in England then proceeded to prevent this measure by taking 16,000 Hanoverian troops into British pay. No measure of the time excited such violent hostility, and the intervention of Lord Orford was required to carry it. Pitt openly declared that the interest of England imperatively required complete separation from Hanover. In the House of Lords twenty-four peers signed a protest against it, in language so bitterly offensive to the sovereign that it almost savoured of revolution. They stated that some of the Hanoverian troops had refused to form the first line at Dettingen, that others disobeyed the English general after the battle, that the greater

number, 'not contented to avoid being of any use either in front or in the rear, determined to be of use nowhere, and halted as soon as they came within sight and reach of the battle, though pressed by the British officers, and invited by the British soldiers, to share the glory, and complete, as they might have done, the victory of the day.' They contended that 'the future co-operation of our national troops with these mercenaries has been rendered impracticable, and even their meeting dangerous;' they complained of 'the many instances of partiality by which the Hanoverians were unhappily distinguished, and our brave fellow subjects, the British forces, undeservedly discouraged'; of 'the constant preference' given to the former 'in quarters, forage, &c.'; of the fact that 'the Hanoverian Guards had for some days done duty upon his Majesty at Aschaffenburg,' which, they added, 'we look upon as the highest dishonour to his Majesty and this nation'; of 'the abject flattery and criminal misrepresentation which this partiality, blameless in itself, has unhappily given occasion to, and by which in its turn it has been fomented'; of the many instances 'wherein the blood and treasure of this nation have been lavishly employed when no British interest, and, as we conceive, some foreign interest alone, was concerned.' That 'the interests of one country are carried on in subordination to those of another, constitutes,' they said, 'the true and mortifying definition of a province,' and they insinuated, in no obscure terms, that England was actually in this position, that 'an inferior German principality was really, and Great Britain only nominally, the director' of the policy of the empire.[1]

Pamphlets, the most remarkable of which were ascribed to

[1] Rogers' *Protest of the Lords*, ii. 37–42. Speaker Onslow relates the following remarkable dialogue with Walpole on the subject. 'A little while before Sir R. Walpole's fall, and as a popular act to save himself (for he went very unwillingly out of his offices and power) he took me one day aside and said: "What will you say, Speaker, if this hand of mine shall bring a message from the King to the House of Commons declaring his consent to having any of his family after his own death to be made by Act of Parliament incapable of inheriting and enjoying the Crown and possessing the Electoral dominions at the same time?" My answer was: "Sir, it will be as a message from Heaven." He replied, "It will be done," but it was not done, and I have good reason to believe it would have been opposed and rejected at this time, because it came from him, and by the means of those who had always been most clamorous for it.'—Speaker Onslow's remarks, in Coxe's *Walpole*, vol. ii. pp. 571–572.

the pen of Chesterfield, containing similar accusations in even stronger language, were widely circulated,[1] and no agitation was necessary to strengthen the indignation at the German policy of the Court. Of that policy Carteret was the special representative. He was usually abroad with the King. He based his power chiefly on his influence upon the King's mind, he cordially threw himself into the King's views about the German war, and he aimed at a German coalition, for the purpose of wresting Alsace and Lorraine from France, and thus compensating Maria Theresa for the loss of Silesia. His arrogance or recklessness offended all with whom he came in contact. Newcastle, especially, he treated with habitual insolence, and he contemptuously neglected that traffic in places which was then so essential to political power. He speedily became the most unpopular man in the country, and his unpopularity was not atoned for by any very splendid success. There was undoubtedly abundance of vigour, and considerable ability displayed in the measures I have enumerated, but Carteret did not, like Pitt, possess the art of inspiring the nation or the army with a high military enthusiasm, of selecting the ablest men for the most important commands, or of directing his blows against the most vulnerable points of the enemy. The formation of the army of Flanders was probably a mistake. The issue of the campaign was miserably abortive, and there can be but little doubt that Newcastle judged wisely in refusing to associate England with a project for the invasion and the dismemberment of France.

Under these circumstances a conflict between the two sections of the Government was inevitable. Lord Wilmington died in July 1743, having held the chief power for little more than sixteen months. Lord Bath, who clearly perceived the mistake he had made in declining office, now eagerly aspired to the vacant place, and he was warmly supported by Carteret, who designed to retain for himself the direction of the war, and to strengthen his position by bringing into office a considerable number of Tories. Bath was personally almost equally ob-

[1] See *The Case of the Hanover Troops*, the *Interest of Hanover*, the *Vindication of the Case of the Hanover Troops*. A curious collection of passages from the principal pamphlets against these troops will be found in *Faction Defeated by the Evidence of Facts*, pp. 124–125 (7th ed.).

noxious to the King and to the people, but the influence of Carteret over the royal mind was so great that he would probably have gained his point had not the popular clamour been supported by the still powerful voice of Orford, who represented to the King the danger of admitting Tories to office, and the extreme and growing unpopularity of his Government. By the influence of the old statesman, the Pelham interest became supreme, Henry Pelham obtaining the position of Prime Minister. Being the younger brother of the Duke of Newcastle, he was supported by a vast amount of family and borough influence, and without any great or shining talents he succeeded in playing a very considerable part in English history. He had been first brought into office chiefly by the recommendation of Walpole, had supported his patron faithfully in the contest about the excise, and in the disastrous struggle of 1740 and 1741, and was looked upon as the natural heir of his policy. Like Walpole, he had none of the talents that are necessary for the successful conduct of war, and was, perhaps for that very reason, warmly in favour of peace. Like Walpole, too, he was thoroughly conversant with questions of finance, and almost uniformly successful in dealing with them. A timid, desponding, and somewhat fretful man, with little energy either of character or intellect, he possessed at least, to a high degree, good sense, industry, knowledge of business, and parliamentary experience; his manners were conciliatory and decorous, and he was content to hold the reins of power very loosely, freely admitting competitors to office, and allowing much divergence of opinion. Lord Hardwicke, the greatest lawyer of his day, and one of the greatest who ever took part in English politics, was his warm friend, and he attached to his cause both Chesterfield and Pitt. After a protracted struggle in the Cabinet, Carteret, who, by the death of his mother, had become Lord Granville, was compelled to yield, and resigned office in November 1744.

The ascendancy of the Pelhams in England, however, was far from leading to peace. On the contrary, in no other stage of the war did the martial energies of Europe blaze so fiercely or extend so widely as in 1744 or 1745. The death of Fleury removed the chief pacific influence from the councils of France; and Cardinal Tencin, who succeeded him, and who is said to

have obtained his hat by the friendship of the Pretender, resolved to signalise his government by the invasion of England. 15,000 men,[a] under the command of Marshal Saxe, were assembled for that purpose at Dunkirk. A powerful fleet sailed from Brest and Rochefort for their protection, and the young Pretender arrived from Rome to accompany the expedition. In England every preparation was made for a deadly struggle. The forts on the Thames and Medway were strengthened. Several regiments were marched to the southern coast; the Kentish Militia were put under arms; troops were recalled from the Netherlands, and application was made to the States-General for the 6,000 men which in case of invasion Holland was bound by treaty to furnish. For a few weeks party warfare almost ceased, but in order to guard against every attempt at rebellion, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and a proclamation issued for enforcing the laws against Papists and Nonjurors. Towards the end of February, the French fleet appeared in the Channel; and, perceiving no enemy, the commander sent off a rapid message to Dunkirk, to hasten the embarkation, and soon after anchored off Dungeness Point. At this critical moment the English fleet, which was greatly superior in numbers, doubled the South Foreland. An action seemed imminent, but wind and tide were both unfavourable, and Sir John Norris, who commanded the English, resolved to postpone it till the morrow. That night a great tempest arose, before which the French fleet fled in safety, but which scattered far and wide the transports, and put an end for the present to all projects of invasion.

It is a somewhat curious coincidence, that, almost at the same time when a French fleet escaped from the English in the Channel, another fleet had a similar fortune in the Mediterranean. The combined fleet of the French and Spaniards was blockaded in Toulon by the British, under Admiral Matthews. On the 9th of February it sailed from the harbour, and a general engagement ensued. The battle on the part of the English officers appears to have been grossly mismanaged; and the mismanagement was in a great degree due to a deadly feud, which prevented all cordial co-operation between the commander and the Vice-Admiral Lestock. Night closed on the

action without any decisive result, but next morning the fleet of the enemy was in flight. A pursuit was ordered, and the Vice-Admiral had gained considerably upon the fugitives, when the English ships were somewhat unaccountably ordered to retrace their steps, and the enemy made their way in safety to Carthagena and Alicante. The escape of these two fleets threw much discredit upon the naval enterprise of England, and the Admiral and Vice-Admiral of the Mediterranean fleet mutually accused each other. There appear to have been grave faults on both sides; but the decision of the court martial was given against Admiral Matthews, who was removed from the service, and several commanders of ships were cashiered.

England and France, though taking a leading part in the war, had hitherto been engaged only as auxiliaries, and, though they had met in so many fields, they were still nominally at peace. This unnatural state of things now terminated. In March France declared war against England, and in April against Austria, and she at the same time prepared to throw her full energies upon the Austrian Netherlands. A French army of about 80,000 men, under the able leadership of Marshal Saxe, animated by the presence of Lewis XV., and accompanied by a train of artillery that was said to have been superior to any hitherto known, poured over the frontier, and was everywhere victorious. It is a curious fact, that among its officers, one of the most conspicuous and successful was by profession a Churchman. The Prince of Clermont, the great-grandson of the illustrious Condé, was the Abbé of St. Germain des Prés, but the Pope, Clement XII., gave him a dispensation to take part in the war, and he directed the principal attacks upon the fortress of Ypres. The allies were weak, divided, and incapable. In two months Ypres, Courtrai, Menin, and Furnes were taken, and the whole of the Low Countries would probably have been conquered, had not the invaders been arrested by sinister news from Alsace.

That province had been left under the protection of Marshal Coigny, and of the Bavarian General Seckendorf, whose combined armies were believed to be sufficient to guard the passes of the Rhine. General Khevenhuller had died in the previous winter; but Prince Charles of Lorraine, who commanded the

Austrians, and who was accompanied by Marshal Traun, one of the ablest soldiers in the Austrian service, succeeded in deceiving his enemies, and his army in three bodies crossed the Rhine. The war raged fiercely around Spire, Weissenburg, and Saverne, in that unhappy country which has been fated in so many contests to be the battlefield of Europe. The Austrians, with an army of 60,000 men, effected a secure lodgment in Alsace, and advanced to the frontiers of Lorraine; and the French King, leaving Marshal Saxe with 30,000 men, to maintain his conquests in the Netherlands, hastened with the remainder of the army to its relief. The King fell ill at Metz, and appeared for a time at the point of death, but after a somewhat dangerous delay, his troops arrived by forced marches in Alsace, which seemed destined to be the scene of the decisive struggle of the year, when a new enemy suddenly appeared in the field, and again diverted the course of the war.

This enemy was Frederick of Prussia. No prince of his time perceived his interests more clearly, or acted on them with such combined secrecy, energy, and skill; and as he was at the head of one of the best armies in Europe, and as it cost him nothing to break a treaty or to abandon an ally, he succeeded in a very great degree in making himself the arbiter of the war. By the Peace of Breslau he had once already suddenly changed its fortunes, and brought about the almost complete destruction of one of the armies of the ally whom he had deserted, and he had hitherto resisted all overtures to break the peace. He calculated, as he himself informs us, that 'the longer the war should continue the more would the resources of the House of Austria be exhausted, while the longer Prussia remained at peace the more strength she would acquire.' But, on the other hand, it was one of his maxims that 'it is a capital error in politics to trust a reconciled enemy;' and there was much in the present aspect of affairs to excite both his cupidity and his fears. He was alarmed by the ascendancy the Austrians had obtained in Alsace, and by the prospect of the annexation of Lorraine; by the growing ambition of the Queen of Hungary, which made it peculiarly unlikely that she would permanently acquiesce in the alienation of Silesia, and by intelligence that Saxony had agreed to join in the league

against France. It was a suspicious circumstance that the Treaty of Worms, while enumerating and guaranteeing many other treaties, had made no mention of the Peace of Breslau, by which he held Silesia; and George II. was reported to have used some language implying that he, at least, would not be reluctant to see that province restored. Even before the close of 1743 Frederick had been in secret negotiation with France, and the events in Alsace strengthened his determination. Maria Theresa had not committed the smallest act since the peace of Breslau that could be construed into hostility to Prussia, but Frederick concluded, with reason, that she had never forgiven his past treachery, and he feared that if she became too strong, she would endeavour to drive him from Silesia. This might be the result if she were victorious in Alsace. It might be equally the result if France, alarmed at her progress, made peace, and retired from the war. On the other hand, the wars of Alsace, the Netherlands, and Italy had left the Austrian provinces almost undefended, and the King saw the possibility of effecting a new spoliation by annexing a portion of Bohemia to his dominions. After some unsuccessful negotiation with Russia, he signed secret conventions with the Emperor, France, the Elector Palatine, and the Landgrave of Hesse; and engaged to invade Bohemia, stipulating that a considerable portion of that country which adjoined Silesia should be annexed to his dominions. In August 1744 he issued a manifesto, declaring that he had taken arms to support the rights of the Emperor, to defend the liberty and restore the peace of the Germanic empire. He marched through Saxony, in defiance of the wishes of the Elector, invaded Bohemia, captured Prague, with its entire garrison, on September 16, and speedily reduced all Bohemia to the east of the Moldau. At the same time a united army of Bavarians and Hessians expelled the Austrians from the greater part of Bavaria, and on October 22 reinstated the Emperor in Munich. At this point, however, his usual good fortune abandoned Frederick. Maria Theresa again fled to Hungary, and was again received with an enthusiasm that completely disconcerted her enemies. An army of 44,000 men was speedily equipped in Hungary, while on the other side Prince Charles of Lorraine and Marshal Traun hastened to

abandon Alsace, effected, with scarcely any loss, a masterly retreat over the Rhine, in the presence of the united French army, and marched rapidly upon Bohemia. The irregular troops, which played so prominent a part in Austrian warfare, assisted as they were by the good wishes of the whole population, and by the nature of the country, soon reduced the Prussians to extreme distress. The villages were deserted. No peasant came to the camp to sell provisions. The defiles of the mountains that surround Bohemia swarmed with hussars and Croats, who intercepted convoys and cut off intelligence; and their success was so great that on one occasion the King and army remained for four weeks absolutely without news. To add to their disasters, 20,000 Saxon troops marched to the assistance of Prince Charles, while a severe winter greatly aggravated the sufferings of the invaders. A rapid retreat became necessary, and the Prussians were compelled to abandon all their conquests, and to retire broken, baffled, and dispirited into Silesia. The French and the Emperor were the only gainers. Marshal Saxe maintained his position in the Netherlands. Alsace was freed from its invaders, and the French, crossing the Rhine, laid siege to the important town of Friburg. The Austrian General Damnitz defended it for thirty-five days, till it was little more than a mass of ruins, and till half the garrison and 15,000 of the besiegers had been killed; and its capture concluded the campaign.

While these events were happening in Germany, Italy also was the theatre of a bloody, desolating, but utterly indecisive war. Maria Theresa and the King of Sardinia were now professedly united, but they insisted on pursuing separate ends. The interests of the King were in the north, and his immediate object was the conquest of Finale. The Austrians, on the other hand, drove the Spaniards southwards from near Rimini to the Neapolitan frontier, when the King of Naples, breaking the neutrality he had signed, marched to the war with an army of 15,000 men. The Austrians, outnumbered and baffled, made one daring effort to retrieve their fortunes, and succeeded, in the night of August 10, in surprising the head-quarters of the King of Naples at Velletri. The King and the Duke of Modena were all but killed, and a long and most bloody fight

ensued. At last the Austrians, who had been disorganised by the opportunities of plunder, gave way, and the victory remained with the allies. The malaria arising from the Pontine marshes soon did its work among the German soldiers, and in November the army retired, in a greatly reduced condition, to the neighbourhood of Rimini, while their enemies were quartered between Viterbo and Civita Vecchia. The King of Sardinia, in the meantime, was engaged in a desperate contest with an invading army of French and Spaniards, which forced its way through Nice, fighting almost at every step, invested Coni, and defeated a large force that was sent to its relief. Genoa would have assisted the invaders, but was intimidated by the English fleet; and, in spite of many successes, the French were unable to take Coni, and on the approach of winter they recrossed the Alps, having lost, it is said, not less than 10,000 men in the campaign.

So ended the year 1744, during which a fearful sum of human misery had been inflicted on the world. Bohemia, Bavaria, the Austrian Netherlands and Italy had been desolated by hostile forces. Tens of thousands of lives had been sacrificed, millions of pounds had been uselessly squandered, all the interests of civilisation and industry had been injured or neglected, but it can scarcely be said that a single important result had been achieved. The relative forces of the belligerents at the end of the year were almost the same as they had been at the beginning, and there was as yet no sign of the approach of peace.

In 1745, however, the clouds began in some degree to break. On January 8, an offensive alliance was concluded between England, Holland, Austria, and Saxony, by which the King of Poland agreed, as Elector of Saxony, to furnish 30,000 troops for the defence of Bohemia on condition of receiving a subsidy of 100,000*l.* from England, and of 50,000*l.* from Holland. On January 20 the Emperor Charles VII. died, broken alike by sorrow and by sickness; and the young Elector, refusing to become a candidate for the Imperial dignity, made earnest overtures for peace. The Duke of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was candidate for the Empire, and the Elector agreed to support him, to withdraw his troops from the war, and to recognise the Pragmatic Sanction, provided his Bavarian dominions were secured, and the validity of his father's election was recognised. On April

22 a peace between Austria and Bavaria was signed on these conditions at Fuessen, and in September, to the great disappointment of French politicians, the Imperial dignity reverted to the House of Austria by the almost unanimous election of the Duke of Lorraine as Emperor of Germany. Still more important was the peace between Austria and Prussia, which was negotiated at the end of the year. As may very easily be understood, Maria Theresa felt towards Frederick more bitterly than towards any other enemy. The recovery of Silesia was the object now nearest her heart. Upon the failure of Frederick's last campaign the war had been carried into that province, and, as all the forces that had been employed in Alsace were directed to its conquest, success appeared very probable. The reputation of Frederick was lowered by defeat. The French were concentrating all their efforts upon the Netherlands. Bavaria had seceded from the war, and the King of Poland, having at last extorted from Maria Theresa the promise of some territorial cessions in Silesia in the event of success, now threw himself heartily into the struggle. The extraordinary military abilities of the Prussian King, and the strenuous exertions of the Pelham ministry in favour of peace, overcame this combination. After several inconsiderable skirmishes, Frederick, on June 3, defeated the Austrians under Prince Charles in the great battle of Hohenfriedberg, and soon after followed them in their retreat into Bohemia. England then urgently interposed in favour of peace. Her ambassador urged that the Austrian Netherlands would inevitably succumb before the French if the German war continued, and he represented how impossible it was for England to continue the payment of subsidies to the allies, which in this year amounted to not less than 1,178,753*l.* The Queen refusing to yield, England for her own part signed on August 26 a preliminary convention with Prussia for the purpose of re-establishing peace, by which she guaranteed to Prussia the possession of Silesia according to the Treaty of Breslau, and promised to use every effort to obtain for it a general guarantee by all the Powers of Europe. The Queen of Hungary was indignant but still unshaken, and she resolved to continue the war. On September 30, however, the Austrians were again completely defeated at Sohr. On December 15 the Saxons were routed at

Kesseldorf, and the Prussians soon after marched in triumph into Dresden. Maria Theresa at last yielded, and on December 25 she signed the Peace of Dresden, guaranteeing Frederick the possession of Silesia and Glatz, while Frederick for his part evacuated Saxony, recognised the validity of the Imperial election, and acknowledged the disputed suffrage of Bohemia.

But before this peace was signed events had occurred very disastrous to the interests both of Austria and of England. In Italy Genoa now openly declared herself on the side of the French, and the accession of 10,000 Genoese soldiers, combined with the great military talents of General Gages, who commanded the Spaniards, determined for the present the fortunes of the war. The French, Spaniards, and Neapolitans were everywhere triumphant. Tortona, Placentia, Parma, Pavia, Cazale, and Asti were taken, Don Philip entered Milan in triumph and blockaded the citadel, and the King of Sardinia was driven to take refuge under the walls of his capital.

In Flanders Marshal Saxe, at the head of an army of 80,000 men was equally successful. The Austrians, in their zeal for the conquest of Silesia, spared little more than 8,000 men for the defence of this province, and the task of opposing the French rested chiefly upon the English and the Dutch. In April Marshal Saxe invested Tournay, and on May 11 he fought a great battle with the allies at Fontenoy. The Dutch gave way at an early period of the struggle, but the English and Hanoverians remained firm, and, gradually forming into a solid column of about 16,000 men, they advanced, through a narrow passage that was left between the fortified village of Fontenoy and the neighbouring woods, full against the centre of the French. Regiment after regiment assailed them in vain. Their sustained and deadly fire, their steady intrepidity and the massive power of their charge carried all before it, and the day was almost lost to the French, when Marshal Saxe resolved to make one last and almost despairing effort. Four cannon were brought to play upon the English, and at the same time the order to advance was given to the household troops of the French King, who had hitherto been kept in reserve, and to the Irish brigade, consisting of several regiments of Irish Catholics who had been driven from their country by the events of the Revolution and by the Penal Code, and who

were burning to avenge themselves on their oppressors. Their fiery charge was successful. The British column was arrested, shattered, and dissolved, and a great French victory was the result. In a few days Tournay surrendered, and its fall was followed by that of Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, Dendermonde, Ostend, Nieuport, and Ath.

An immediate consequence of the defeat of Fontenoy was the Jacobite rebellion in Scotland. On July 25, the young Pretender landed, without the support or knowledge of the French, relying only on the popularity of his manners and of his name, and on the assistance of a few Highland chiefs, to recover the throne of his ancestors. A wilder or more hopeless enterprise never convulsed a great empire. The Highlands, where alone he could count upon warm support, contained at this time about one-twelfth of the population of Scotland.[1] Even there many powerful chiefs were bound to the reigning dynasty by the strongest ties of interest. The clans, though they were ever ready to take up arms, and would follow their chiefs in any cause, were utterly destitute of the discipline and subordination of a regular army. Their great object was plunder, and after their first victory more than half the army disbanded to secure the spoil. In the Lowlands the balance of opinion was probably hostile to Jacobitism. The Episcopalians, it is true, were generally disaffected, the Union had left much discontent behind it, and the Scotch origin of the Stuarts was not forgotten, but on the other hand the Highlanders were detested as a race of marauders, the commercial and industrial classes dreaded change, and the great city of Glasgow was decidedly Hanoverian. In England, as the event showed, not a single real step had been taken to prepare an insurrection. The King was in Hanover when the movement began, and the greater part of the English army was endeavouring to protect the Netherlands, yet nothing but the grossest incapacity on the part of the military authorities at home, and an extraordinary want of public spirit in the nation, could have enabled the rebellion, unaided as it was from abroad, to acquire the dimensions which it did. On August 19 the standard of the Stuarts was raised, and before the end of September Prince Charles

[1] See Chambers' *Hist. of the Rebellion.*

was installed in Holyrood Palace, the army of Sir John Cope was completely defeated in the battle of Preston Pans, and almost the whole of Scotland acknowledged the Pretender. At the end of October he prepared, at the head of an army of less than 6,000 men, to invade England. He crossed the frontier on November 8, took Carlisle, after a short resistance on the 15th, marched without opposition through most of the great towns of Lancashire, penetrated as far as Derby, and had produced in London a disgraceful panic and a violent run upon the Bank of England,[1] when the chiefs insisted, in defiance of his wishes, in commencing a retreat. Three considerable armies were formed to oppose him. One of these, commanded by Marshal Wade, was assembled in Yorkshire, and might easily, with common skill, have cut off his retreat. Another, under the Duke of Cumberland, was prepared to intercept him if he marched upon Wales, while a third was assembled on Finchley Common for the protection of London. Dutch soldiers were brought over to support the Government.[2] There was no prospect of serious assistance from France, and in England, if the Pretender met with little active opposition among the people, he met with still less support. In Preston, where the Catholics were very numerous, there was some cheering. In Manchester several of the clergy, and a great part of the populace received him with enthusiasm, and a regiment of about 500 men was enlisted for his service, the first person enrolled being Captain James Dawson, whose mournful fate has been celebrated in the most touching ballad of Shenstone. But the recruits were scarcely equal to half the number of the Highlanders who had deserted in the march from Edinburgh to Carlisle. Liverpool was strongly Hanoverian, and its citizens subscribed 6,000*l.* for equipping a regiment in the service of the Government. In general, however, the prevailing disposition of the people was fear or sullen apathy, and few were disposed to risk anything on either side. The retreat began on December 6. It was skilfully conducted, and in several skirmishes the Scotch were victorious, but their cause was manifestly lost. They regained

[1] See the graphic description of this panic in Fielding's *True Patriot*. It was reported that the Bank saved itself by paying in sixpences.

[2] They were afterwards replaced by Hessians. See Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, iii. 299.

their country, were joined by a few French and a few Irish in the French service, and succeeded on January 17 in defeating a considerable body of English at Falkirk. This was their last gleam of success. Divisions and desertion speedily thinned their ranks. Enemies overwhelming from their numbers and their discipline were pressing upon them, and on April 16, 1746, the battle of Culloden for ever crushed the prospects of the Stuarts. The Hanoverian army, and the Duke of Cumberland who commanded it, displayed in their triumph a barbarity which recalled the memory of Sedgemoor and of the Bloody Assize, while the courage, the loyalty, and the touching fidelity of the Highlanders to their fallen chief cast a halo of romantic interest around his cause.

The extraordinary incapacity of English commanders, both by land and sea, is one of the most striking facts in the war we are considering. Frederick in Prussia, Prince Charles of Lorraine, General Khevenhuller, and Marshal Traun in Austria, General Gages in the service of Spain, and Marshal Saxe in the service of France, had all exhibited conspicuous talent, and both Noailles and Belleisle, though inferior generals, associated their names with brilliant military episodes; but in the English service mismanagement and languor were general. The battle of Dettingen was truly described as a happy escape rather than a great victory; the army in Flanders can hardly be said to have exhibited any military quality except courage, and the British navy, though it gained some successes, added little to its reputation. The one brilliant exception was the expedition of Anson round Cape Horn, for the purpose of plundering the Spanish merchandise and settlements in the Pacific. It lasted for nearly four years, and though it had little effect except that of inflicting a great amount of private misery, it was conducted with a skill and a courage equal to the most splendid achievements of Hawkins or of Blake. The overwhelming superiority of England upon the sea began, however, gradually to influence the war. The island of Cape Breton, which commanded the mouth of Gulf St. Lawrence, and protected the Newfoundland fisheries, was captured in the June of 1745. In 1747 a French squadron was destroyed by a very superior English fleet off Cape Finisterre. Another was defeated near Belleisle, and in the same

year as many as 644 prizes were taken.[1] The war on the part of the English, however, was most efficiently conducted by means of subsidies, which were enormously multiplied. The direct payment of the Hanoverian troops, against which so fierce a clamour had been raised, was, indeed, for a time suspended, but the Queen of Hungary was induced to take those troops into her pay. In order that she should do so her subsidy was increased, and next year the Government, without producing any considerable disturbance, reverted quietly to the former policy. The war, however, was now evidently drawing to a close, and the treaties of 1745 had greatly restricted its theatre. Austria, freed from apprehension on the side of Prussia and Bavaria, was enabled in 1746 to send 30,000 additional soldiers into Italy, where she speedily recovered almost everything she had lost in the preceding year, and defeated the united French and Spaniards in the battle of Placentia. The death of Philip V., which took place in July, made the Spaniards desirous of peace. The command of their army was taken from General Gages, and their troops were soon after ordered to evacuate Italy. Finale was occupied by the Sardinians. Genoa itself was captured by the Austrians, but rescued by a sudden insurrection of the populace. The project of the invasion of Naples was abandoned, in consequence of the opposition of the King of Sardinia, who had grown jealous of Austria, and feared to see her omnipotent in Italy. Provence, however, was invaded and devastated in the November of 1746, and Antibes besieged; but soon after the revolt of Genoa the Austrians were recalled. A second siege of Genoa was raised by a French army, under Belleisle, which burst through Nice, took town after town in that province, and compelled the Austrians and Sardinians to retire. An attempt was then made to capture Turin by a French corps, commanded by the brother of Belleisle, which endeavoured to force its way through the valley of Susa, but it was defeated with great loss at an entrenchment called the Assietta, the commander was killed, and Marshal Belleisle, who had counselled the expedition, and who intended to co-operate with it, fell back upon Nice.

While the fortune of the war was thus rapidly fluctuating in Italy, in the Netherlands it was uniformly in favour of the French.

[1] Smollett, *Hist. of England*, ch. ix.

The Scotch rebellion, which compelled England for a time to withdraw her troops, confirmed the military ascendancy which Marshal Saxe had already acquired. In 1746 Brussels with its whole garrison was captured, and soon after Mechlin, Louvain, Antwerp, Mons, Charleroi, and Namur succumbed. This last town, on whose fortifications the rival genius of Cohorn and Vauban had been in turn employed, now yielded after a siege of six days. The superiority of the French in numbers and especially in artillery, the genius of Marshal Saxe and the paralysing effect of a great domestic sorrow upon Prince Charles of Lorraine, who commanded the Austrians, made the campaign an uninterrupted triumph for the French, who, soon after the arrival of a British force, defeated the allies in the battle of Roucoux, and became masters of all the Austrian Netherlands, except Limburg and Luxemburg. Next year they invaded the Dutch Republic. Zealand was overrun by troops, 5,000 prisoners were taken in less than a month, and several towns and fortresses were occupied. The Dutch, who found their republican institutions much more adapted for securing their liberty in time of peace than for giving energy and concentration to their forces in time of war, adopted a policy which they had before pursued. During their long conflicts with the Spaniards they had confided the executive power to the House of Orange, but soon after the Peace of Westphalia had given Holland a recognised place among European States, the hereditary Stadtholdership was abolished and purely republican institutions were created. When the country, in 1672, was reduced to the verge of ruin by the invasion of Lewis XIV. it reverted to the former system and retained it for thirty years. It now again recurred to it, and a popular insurrection made the House of Orange hereditary rulers. The war, however, continued to be disastrous. The allies were defeated in a great battle at Lauffeld, near Maestricht, on July 2; Sir John Ligonier, who commanded the English cavalry, and who displayed extraordinary courage in the struggle, was taken prisoner, and the campaign ended with the surprise and capture of the almost impregnable fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom, by Count Lowendahl. It is a curious feature of this campaign that Ligonier, who distinguished himself most highly in the English ranks, was a

French refugee, while of the French commanders Marshal Saxe was by birth a German, and Lowendahl a Dane.

In the meantime the Pelham Government, though unsuccessful abroad, had acquired a complete ascendancy at home. The martial enthusiasm of the country had gone down, and public opinion being gratified by the successive deposition of Walpole and of Carteret, and being no longer stimulated by a powerful Opposition, acquiesced languidly in the course of events. The King for a time chafed bitterly against the yoke. He had been thwarted in his favourite German policy, deprived of the minister who was beyond comparison the most pleasing to him, and compelled to accept others in whom he had no confidence. He despised and disliked Newcastle. He hated Chesterfield, whom he was compelled to admit to office, and he was especially indignant with Pitt, who had described Hanover as 'a beggarly Electorate' and accused its soldiers of cowardice, and whose claims to office Pelham was continually urging. At length, in February 1745-46, while the rebellion was still raging, the perplexed monarch tried to extricate himself from his embarrassments by holding private communications with Bath and Granville. The ministers were apprised of it and at once resigned. The impotence of their rivals was speedily shown, and in forty-eight hours they were obliged to acknowledge themselves incapable of forming a Government. The Pelhams returned to power, but their position was immeasurably strengthened. The few remaining adherents of Bath were driven from office. The King acknowledged with great irritation that it was impossible for him to resist. He refused, indeed, to make Pitt Secretary of War, but sanctioned his appointment to the lucrative office of Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and soon after to the still more important position of Paymaster of the Forces.

The great work of the Government was the pacification of Europe by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Another campaign had actually begun when the preliminaries were signed. Russia had at last been brought into the war, and 30,000 Russian soldiers subsidised by the maritime Powers were on the march to rescue the Netherlands. It was not impossible that this powerful reinforcement might have given a new course to the war. In Italy the balance of success was on the whole in

favour of the Austrians. The commerce of France had been almost annihilated by the English; her resources were nearly exhausted by the extraordinary exertions she had made, and the returning prosperity produced by the long pacific government of Fleury had been completely overcast. On the other hand, Nice and Savoy were still occupied by the French and Spaniards. The French were almost absolute masters of the Austrian Netherlands; the capture of Bergen-op-Zoom and the subsequent investment of Maestricht had rendered the condition of the Dutch Republic almost desperate, and it would probably have been crushed before any succour could arrive. Maria Theresa, it is true, ardently desired the continuance of the war, hoping to obtain in Italy some compensation for the loss of Silesia, and the Duke of Newcastle was inclined, in opposition to his brother, to support her; but she waged war chiefly by the assistance of the subsidies of England, and her ambition was clearly contrary to the general interests of Europe. Like many absolute sovereigns she appears to have been completely indifferent to the misery and desolation she caused, provided only she could leave her empire as extended as she had received it. She was resolved also to throw the defence of the Austrian Netherlands almost exclusively on the maritime Powers, employing the subsidies, which she received on the express condition of keeping a large army in those provinces, mainly in a war of aggression in Italy; and she was bitterly aggrieved because the English, under these circumstances, diminished her remittances. With the exception of the King of Sardinia, however, who saw prospects of pushing his fortunes in Italy, and who was determined, if possible, to avoid restoring the Duchy of Finale, she found little support in her hostility to peace. Spain was now governed by a perfectly unambitious sovereign, who wished for nothing but repose. Holland was reduced to such a condition that peace was her first necessity. England was ruled by an eminently pacific minister; and there was hardly any Opposition to impede his policy. The enormous subsidies which England had been for years scattering through Europe were rapidly adding to her debt and impairing her prosperity, and it was not clear what object she had to gain. The quarter in which the French arms were most successful was precisely that most dangerous to Eng-

land; and except the capture of Cape Breton, and of a number of prizes, she had obtained little or nothing as a compensation for her sacrifices. Even in India, where the small settlements of France appeared almost at the mercy of England, she had encountered reverses. Two Frenchmen of great abilities and enterprise, but separated from each other by a bitter jealousy, then presided over French interests in India. Dupleix, after a brilliant industrial career upon the Ganges, had been made Governor of the French settlement of Pondicherry, while La Bourdonnais, one of the bravest and most skilful seamen France has ever produced, directed affairs in the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius. La Bourdonnais succeeded, in the course of 1746, in repelling an English squadron under Admiral Barnet, and in besieging and taking Madras. As express orders from the ministry at home prohibited him from occupying permanently any conquests that might be made in India, a capitulation was signed by which the town was to be restored on the payment of a specified ransom. It passed, however, under the dominion of Dupleix, who shamefully broke the capitulation and subjected the English to scandalous outrages, while La Bourdonnais returned to France and was soon after, on false charges, flung into the Bastille, where he remained for nearly three years. In 1748 the English made a formidable attempt to retaliate upon the French, and a large force of English and Sepoy troops, under the command of Admiral Boscawen and of Major Lawrence, besieged Pondicherry. It was defended, however, by Dupleix with great energy and genius. The rainy season came on, sickness decimated the besiegers, and the enterprise was at last abandoned.

It was plain that the time for peace had arrived. France had already made overtures, and she showed much moderation, and at this period much disinterestedness in her demands, and the influence of England and Holland at length forced the peace upon Austria and Sardinia, though both were bitterly aggrieved by its conditions. France agreed to restore every conquest she had made during the war, to abandon the cause of the Stuarts, and expel the Pretender from her soil, to demolish, in accordance with earlier treaties, the fortifications of Dunkirk on the side of the sea, while retaining those on the side of the land, and to retire from the contest without acquiring any fresh terri-

tory or any pecuniary compensation. England in like manner restored the few conquests she had made, and submitted to the somewhat humiliating condition of sending hostages to Paris as a security for the restoration of Cape Breton. The right of search, in opposition to which she had originally drawn the sword against Spain, and the debt of 95,000*l.*, which the Convention of 1739 acknowledged to be owing to her by Spain, were not even mentioned in the peace. The disputed boundary between Canada and Nova Scotia, which had been a source of constant difficulty with France, was left altogether undefined. The Assiento treaty for trade with the Spanish colonies was confirmed for the four years it had still to run, but no real compensation was obtained for a war expenditure which is said to have exceeded sixty-four millions,[1] and which had raised the funded and unfunded debt to more than seventy-eight millions.[2] Of the other Powers, Holland, Genoa, and the little State of Modena retained their territory as before the war, and Genoa remained mistress of the Duchy of Finale, which had been ceded to the King of Sardinia by the Treaty of Worms, and which it had been a main object of his later policy to secure. Austria obtained a recognition of the election of the Emperor, a general guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the restoration of everything she had lost in the Netherlands, but she gained no additional territory. She was compelled to confirm the cession of Silesia and Glatz to Prussia, to abandon her Italian conquests, and even to cede a considerable part of her former Italian dominions. To the bitter indignation of Maria Theresa, the Duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla passed to Don Philip of Spain, to revert, however, to their former possessors if Don Philip mounted the Spanish throne, or died without male issue. The King of Sardinia also obtained from Austria the territorial cessions enumerated in the Treaty of Worms, with the important exceptions of Placentia, which passed to Don Philip, and of Finale, which remained with the Genoese. For the loss of these he obtained no compensation. Frederick obtained a general guarantee for the possession of his newly-acquired territory, and a long list of old treaties was formally confirmed.[3]

[1] Chalmers' *Estimate*, p. 105.

[2] Coxe's *Pelham*, ii. 77.

[3] See on this war Frederick, *Mémoires de mon Temps*, the *Mémoires*

Thus small were the changes effected in Europe by so much bloodshed and treachery, by nearly nine years of wasteful and desolating war. The design of the dismemberment of Austria had failed, but no vexed question had been set at rest. International antipathies and jealousies had been immeasurably increased, and the fearful sufferings and injuries that had been inflicted on the most civilised nations had not even purchased the blessing of an assured peace. Of all the ambitious projects that had been conceived during the war, that of Frederick alone was substantially realised, and France, while endeavouring to weaken one rival, had contributed largely to lay the foundation of the greatness of another.

The definitive peace between England and Holland, and France was signed on October 18, 1748, and the other Powers acceded to it before the close of the year. From this time till the death of Pelham in March 1754, political rivalry in England almost ceased. The Tories were gratified by a few places, and almost every politician of talent and influence was connected with the Government. The Prince of Wales, who kept up some faint semblance of opposition, died in March 1750. Even Lord Granville, sated with ambition and broken by excessive drinking, joined the ministry in 1751, accepting the dignified but uninfluential post of President of the Council. During this period the leading ideas of the policy of Walpole were steadily pursued. Europe being at peace, and the dynasty firmly established by the suppression of the rebellion, the army and navy were both rigorously reduced; 20,000 soldiers and 34,000 sailors and marines were discharged, and some serious distress having in consequence arisen, it was met by the bold and novel expedient of a system of emigration, organised and directed by the Government. As early as 1735 Captain Coram, in a memorial to the Privy Council, had called attention to the deserted and unprotected state of Nova Scotia, to the ease with which the French carried their encroachments into that province, and to the insufficiency of the small British garrison which was collected at Annapolis for its protection. Nova Scotia was justly regarded as the key to North America, equally important in time of war for attacking Canada and

de Valori, Voltaire, *Louis XV.*, and the histories of Smollett, Coxe, Carlyle, Ranke, Martin, and Lord Stanhope.

for defending New England. The adjacent sea teemed with fish, and its magnificent forests supplied admirable timber for the royal navy. It was accordingly determined to strengthen the colony by encouraging the officers and men lately dismissed from the land and sea service, to settle there with or without their families. To every private was offered a free passage, a free maintenance for twelve months, the fee simple of fifty acres of land, an additional grant of ten acres for every member of his family, and an immunity from taxation for ten years. The officers received still larger grants, varying according to their rank. The scheme was eminently successful. About 4,000 men, many of them with their families, embraced the Government offers. The expedition sailed in May under the command of Colonel Cornwallis, and with the protection of two regiments. It was joined on its arrival by an additional force, which had lately been withdrawn from Cape Breton, and soon after the new colonists founded the important town of Halifax, which derived its name from Lord Halifax, who, as President of the Board of Trade, was a principal person in organising the expedition, and which soon became the capital of a flourishing colony.[1]

Not less successful was the financial policy of Pelham. The measures which were carried in 1717 and 1727 for reducing the interest of the debt have been already recounted, and another effort in the same direction had been made by Sir John Barnard in 1737. He had proposed to reduce gradually that portion of the debt which bore four per cent. interest to three per cent., enabling the Government to borrow money at the lower rate in order to pay off those creditors, who refused to accept the reduction. As the three per cents. were at this time at a premium, and as it was part of the scheme of Sir John Barnard that the contributors to the new loan should be guaranteed from payment of any part of the principal for fourteen years, there is not much doubt that the plan in its essential features could have been carried out, nor yet that it would have been very beneficial to the nation. It was, however, exceedingly unpopular. The great companies who contributed so powerfully to support the ministry of Walpole were opposed to it. A deep impression was made throughout the country by a

[1] Smollett's *Hist. of England.* Coxe's *Life of Pelham.*

statement that a very large proportion of the 4 per cent. funds were in the possession of widows and orphans and trustees, who would suffer greatly by the reduction. The growing complications with Spain made it probable that the Government would soon be compelled to have recourse to new loans, and especially important that it should take no step that could alienate the moneyed classes, or injure, however unjustly, the credit of the country. Besides this, the Government was now too weak to bear the strain of additional unpopularity, and Sir John Barnard, who originated the measure, was a prominent member of the Opposition Under these circumstances Walpole, after some hesitation, placed himself in opposition to the Bill. He showed even more than his usual financial knowledge in pointing out the weak points in its details, and he succeeded without difficulty in defeating it.[1] The question of how far he was justified in this course by the special political circumstances of the time is one which can hardly be answered without a more minute knowledge of the dispositions of Members of Parliament and of the currents of feeling in the country than it is now possible to attain. The strong ministry of the Pelhams, however, was able to carry out a somewhat similar measure, in spite of the strenuous opposition both of the Bank and of the East India Company, in 1749. By far the larger part of the national debt was at 4 per cent., a part was at 3½ per cent., and another part at 3 per cent. As the 3 per cents. were selling at par, and the 3½ per cents above par,[2] the time had evidently come when a reduction was feasible. Availing himself largely of the assistance, without absolutely adopting the plan, of Sir J. Barnard, Pelham introduced and carried a scheme by which such holders of 4 per cent. stock as consented by February 28, 1749–50, to accept the arrangement were to receive 3½ per cent. interest from December 1750 to December 1757, with a security that no part of their stock should be redeemed before the latter date except what

[1] Compare Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, ch. xlvii.; Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 500–502; and Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 325–332. It is remarkable that this was almost the only question on which Henry Pelham ever voted against Walpole.

[2] Coxe states that an individual was said at this time to have purchased 3 per cents. at 109¼. This, however, must have been quite an isolated transaction, and the ordinary price appears to have been from par to 101. Coxe's *Pelham*, ii. 77–85. Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 504–507.

was due to the East India Company. After December 1757 the interest was to sink to 3 per cent. till reduced by the Government, while those who refused the arrangement were to be paid off by a loan raised at 3 per cent. The offer does not appear very tempting, but the normal rate of interest was then so low, commercial investments were so few, and the attraction of the Government security was so great, that the majority of holders accepted it, and when February arrived only eighteen or nineteen millions had not been brought under the arrangement. The success, of course, increased its popularity, and Pelham accordingly renewed the offer, though on less favourable conditions, for in the case of these second subscribers the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest was to be exchanged for 3 per cent. interest in December 1755. The result of this prolongation was, that not much more than 3 millions remained excluded, and the holders of this stock were paid off in 1751. For seven years after 1750 an annual saving was thus made of 288,517*l.*, and after 1757 it amounted in the whole to 577,034*l.*, which was to be applied to the reduction of the national debt. The success of this measure reflected great credit on the Government, and it furnished an extremely remarkable proof of how prosperous and wealthy the country remained at the close of a long and exhausting war. In 1752 Pelham completed his financial reforms by a measure simplifying and consolidating the different branches of the national debt, and thus removing a cause of much perplexity and some expense both to the public and to individuals.[1]

It was in this department of legislation that the Governments of the Walpole and Pelham period were most successful. In very few periods in English political history was the commercial element more conspicuous in administration. The prevailing spirit of the debates was of a kind we should rather have expected in a middle-class Parliament than in a Parliament consisting in a very large measure of the nominees of great families. A competition of economy reigned in all parties. The questions which excited most interest were chiefly financial and commercial ones. The increase of the national debt, the

[1] Coxe's *Pelham*. Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*. Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*.

possibility and propriety of reducing its interest, the advantages of a sinking fund, the policy of encouraging trade by bounties and protective duties, the evils of excise, the reduction of the land-tax, the burden of Continental subsidies, were among the topics which produced the most vehement and the most powerful debates. Burke, in a letter which he wrote in 1752 describing the House of Commons during the Pelham administration, summed up the requirements of a Member of Parliament in one pregnant sentence, which would hardly have been true of the next generation: 'A man, after all, would do more by figures of arithmetic than by figures of rhetoric.'[1] Even the religious questions which produced most excitement throughout the country, the naturalisation of Jews and the naturalisation of foreign Protestants, were argued chiefly in Parliament upon commercial grounds. The question in home politics, however, which excited most interest in the nation was of a different kind, and it was one which, for very obvious reasons, Parliament desired as much as possible to avoid. It was the extreme corruption of Parliament itself, its subserviency to the influence of the Executive, and the danger of its becoming in time rather the oppressor than the representative of the people.

This danger had been steadily growing since the Revolution, and it had reached such a point that there were many who imagined that the country had gained little by exchanging an arbitrary King for a corrupt and often a tyrannical Parliament. The extraordinary inequalities of the constituencies had long attracted attention. Cromwell had for a time remedied the evil by a bold measure, sweeping away the rotten boroughs, granting members to the greatest unrepresented towns, strengthening the county representation, and at the same time summoning Irish and Scotch Members to the Parliament in London; but although Clarendon described this as 'a warrantable alteration, and fit to be made in better times,' the old state of things returned with the Restoration. The Revolution had been mainly a conflict between the Crown and the Parliament, and its effect had been greatly to increase the authority of the latter; but, with the exception of the Triennial Bill, nothing of much real value had been done to make it

[1] Prior's *Life of Burke*, i. 38.

a more faithful representation of the people. Locke, in a memorable passage, complained that 'the bare name of a town, of which there remains not so much as the ruins, where scarce so much housing as a sheepcot or more inhabitants than a shepherd is to be found, sends as many representatives to the grand Assembly of lawmakers, as a whole county, numerous in people and powerful in riches'; but he could discover no safe remedy for the evil.[1] Defoe[2] and the Speaker Onslow[3] both desired an excision of the rotten boroughs, but there was no general movement in this direction, and the party which was naturally most inclined to change shrank from a reform which might have been fatal to the Government of the Revolution. The Scotch union aggravated the evil by increasing the number of sham boroughs and of subservient Members. If the anomalies were not quite so great as they became after the sudden growth of the manufacturing towns in the closing years of the eighteenth century, and in the early years of the nineteenth century, the Parliament was at least much more arbitrary and corrupt. Only a fraction of its Members were elected by considerable and independent constituencies. The enormous expense of the county elections, where the poll might be kept open for forty days, kept these seats almost exclusively in the hands of a few families, while many small boroughs were in the possession of rich noblemen, or were notoriously offered for sale. The Government, by the proprietary rights of the Crown over the Cornish boroughs, by the votes of its numerous excise or revenue officers, by direct purchase, or by bestowing places or peerages on the proprietors, exercised an absolute authority over many seats,[4] and its means of influencing the assembled Parliament were so great that it is difficult to understand how, in the corrupt moral atmosphere that was prevalent, it was possible to resist it. The

[1] *On Civil Government*, bk. ii. ch. xiii.

[2] *Tour in England.*

[3] Note to Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 458.

[4] Thus in a debate in 1743, Chesterfield said: 'Many of our boroughs are now so much the creatures of the Crown that they are generally called Court boroughs, and very properly they are called so. For our ministers for the time being have always the nomination of their representatives, and make such an arbitrary use of it that they often order them to choose gentlemen whom they never saw, nor heard of, perhaps, till they saw their names on the minister's order for choosing them. This order they always punctually obey, and would, I believe, obey it, were the person named in it the minister's footman.'—*Parl. Hist.* xiii. 90.

legal and ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown was mainly employed in supporting a parliamentary influence. Great sums of secret service money were usually expended in direct bribery, and places and pensions were multiplied to such an extent that it is on record that out of 550 Members there were in the first Parliament of George I. no less than 271, in the first Parliament of George II. no less than 257, holding offices, pensions, or sinecures.[1] And the body which was thus constituted was rapidly becoming supreme in the State. The control of the purse was a prerogative which naturally would make it so; but during the triennial period the frequency of elections made the Members to a great extent subservient to the people who elected, or to the noblemen who nominated them, and gave each Parliament scarcely time to acquire much self-confidence, fixity of purpose, or consistency of organisation. The Septennial Act and the presence of Walpole in the House of Commons during the whole of his long ministry, gradually made that body the undoubted centre of authority.[2] In the reign of Anne it was thought quite natural that Harley and St. John should accept peerages in the very zenith of their careers. In the reign of George II., Walpole only accepted a title in the hour of defeat, and Pulteney, by taking a similar step, gave a death-blow to his political influence.

It is obvious that a body such as this might become in the highest degree dangerous to the liberties it was supposed to protect, and it showed itself in many respects eminently arbitrary and encroaching. The cases of Fenwick and Bernardi were sufficiently alarming instances of the assumption by the Legislature of judicial functions, but in these cases at least all the three branches had concurred. In other cases, however, the lower House acted alone. One of the rights of the subject specially guaranteed by the Bill of Rights was that of petition, but it was not then foreseen that the House of Commons might prove as hostile to it as the King. The case of the Kentish petitioners, however, clearly showed the reality of this danger.

[1] Sir E. May's *Const. Hist.* i. 317.

[2] Onslow has left on record his opinion that the Septennial Act formed 'the era of the emancipation of the Commons from its former dependence on the Crown and on the House of Lords.'—Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, i. 75.

In 1701, when a Tory House of Commons, in bitter opposition to the King and to the House of Lords, had impeached Somers, delayed the supplies, and thwarted every attempt to put the country in a state of security, a firm, but perfectly temperate and respectful petition to the House was signed by the grand jury and other freeholders of Kent recalling the great services of William, and imploring the House to turn its loyal addresses into Bills of supply, and to enable the King to assist his allies before it was too late. A more strictly constitutional proceeding could hardly be imagined, but because this petition reflected on the policy of the majority, the House voted it scandalous, insolent, and seditious, ordered the five gentlemen who presented it into custody, and kept them imprisoned for two months, till they were released by the prorogation. Nor was this all. At the ensuing dissolution Mr. Thomas Colepepper, who had been one of the five, stood for Maidstone, but was defeated by two votes. He petitioned the new House of Commons for the seat, but it at once condemned him as guilty of corruption, and proceeded to show the spirit in which it had tried the case by reviving the question of the Kentish petition, passing a new resolution to the effect that the petitioner had been guilty of 'scandalous, villanous, and groundless reflections upon the late House of Commons,' directing the Attorney-General to prosecute him for that offence, and commiting him to Newgate, where he remained until he had made a formal apology.[1]

No less scandalous, in a different way, was the case of the Aylesbury election. In 1703 an elector at Aylesbury, being denied his right to vote at an election, carried his case before the law courts. At the assizes his right to vote was affirmed and damages were given against those who had denied it; but the Queen's Bench quashed the proceedings, the majority of the Judges maintaining, in opposition to Chief Justice Holt, the very dangerous doctrine that the House of Commons alone had jurisdiction in all cases relating to elections. The case was then carried before the House of Lords as the highest judicial tribunal in the realm. By a large majority, it reversed the judgment of the Queen's Bench, and decided that

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vol. v.; Somers, *Tracts*, xi. 242. Hallam's *Const. Hist.* vol. iii.

the franchise being a right conferred by law, upon certain specified conditions, the law courts had the power of determining how far those conditions were fulfilled. But far from acquiescing in this judicial sentence, the House of Commons at once passed resolutions defying it, threatened severe punishment against all who carried questions of disputed votes into the law courts, and against all lawyers who assisted them, and actually threw four persons into Newgate for taking measures in accordance with the formal judgment of the supreme law court of the nation. The dispute between the two Houses ran so high that it was found necessary to end it by a prorogation.[1]

In many other ways the same spirit was shown. For a considerable time, and especially during the reign of Anne, the House of Commons assumed a regular censorship over the press. I have already referred to the number of acts of severity against public writers in that reign, and it is one of the worst features connected with them that in numerous cases they were simply party measures effected by the mere motion of the House of Commons. Thus Steele was expelled for political libels, and Asgill on the pretext of an absurd book 'On the Possibility of Avoiding Death.' Defoe was prosecuted by the House of Commons for his 'Shortest Way with Dissenters.' Tutchin, by order of the House, was whipped by the hangman. Wellwood, the editor of the 'Mercurius Rusticus,' Dyer, the editor of the well-known 'News Letter,' and Fogg, the proprietor of 'Mist's Journal,' were compelled to express on their knees their contrition to the House. Whitehead's poem called 'Manners' was voted a libel. The sermon of Binckes, comparing the sufferings of Charles I. to those of Christ, a treatise by a physician named Coward, asserting the material nature of the soul, the sermons of Fleetwood, the bishop of St. Asaph's, were all, by order of the House, burnt by the hangman. Occasionally, as in the case of Hoadly, the House passed resolutions of approval.[2] Of the value of its approbation and of its censure we have a curious illustration in an incident which took place long after the period I am now describing. In 1772 Dean Nowell was

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi.; *State Trials*, xiv. Hallam's *Const. Hist.* vol. iii.

[2] Hunt's *Fourth Estate*. Andrew's *Hist. of British Journalism*. Townsend's *Hist. of the House of Commons*, ii. 194–196.

appointed to preach the customary sermon before the House on the anniversary of the Restoration. Only three or four Members were present, and they are said to have been asleep during the sermon, but the House, as usual, passed, unanimously, a vote of thanks to the preacher, and in terms of high eulogy ordered the sermon to be printed. When it appeared it was found that the preacher, being an extreme Tory, had availed himself of the occasion to denounce in the strongest language the Puritans and their principles, to extol the royal martyr in terms of which it can be only said that they were a faithful echo of the Church service for the day, and to urge that the qualities of Charles I. were very accurately reproduced in the reigning sovereign. The House of Commons, which was at this time strongly Whig, was both exasperated and perplexed. It was felt that it would be scarcely becoming to condemn to the flames a sermon which had been printed by its express order and honoured by its thanks, and it accordingly contented itself with ordering, without a division, that its vote of thanks should be expunged.[1]

There were many other prerogatives claimed by the House of Commons which savoured largely of despotism. The term privilege comprised an extended and ill-defined domain of power external to the law. The House claimed the right of imprisoning men to the end of the current session by its sole authority, and its victims could be neither bailed nor released by the law courts.[2] It even claimed for itself collectively, and for each of its Members in his parliamentary capacity, a complete freedom from hostile criticism.[3] Its Members, though they were presumed by the property qualification to be men of means, enjoyed an immunity from all actions of law and suits of equity, and were thus able to set their creditors at defiance, and the same privilege, till the reign of George III., was ex-

[1] *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 311–318. Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, ii. p. 78.

[2] Thus in 1699 the Commons resolved, 'That to assert that the House of Commons have no power of commitment but of their own members tends to the subversion of the constitution of the House of Commons.'

[3] 'That to print or publish any books or libels reflecting upon the proceedings of the House of Commons or of any Member thereof, for or relating to his service therein, is a high violation of the rights and privileges of the House of Commons.' Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*, i. 208.

tended to their servants.[1] An immense amount of fraud, violence, and oppression was thus sheltered from punishment, and the privilege appeared peculiarly odious at a time when the ascendancy of law was in other departments becoming more complete. Almost every injury in word or act done to a Member of Parliament was, during the reign of George II., voted a breach of privilege, and thus brought under the immediate and often vindictive jurisdiction of the House. Among the offences thus characterised were shooting the rabbits of one Member, poaching on the fishponds of another, injuring the trees of a third, and stealing the coal of a fourth.[2]

The abuse of the judicial functions that were properly and reasonably assumed by the House was scandalous and notorious. Even the occasional expulsions of Members for corruption were often themselves the corrupt acts of a corrupt majority, perfectly indifferent to the evidence before them, and intent only on driving out an opponent. The decisions on disputed elections were something more than a scandal. They threatened to subvert the whole theory of representation. The trial of disputed elections had been originally committed to select committees specially nominated, and afterwards to a single body called the Committee of Privileges and Elections, chosen by the House, and composed, for the most part, of Privy Councillors and eminent lawyers. In 1672, however, it was delegated to an open committee, in which all who came were allowed to have voices, and afterwards elections were tried at the bar of the House, and decided by a general vote.[3] This vote was soon openly and almost invariably given through party motives. It is impossible to conceive a more grotesque travesty of a judicial proceeding than was habitually exhibited on these occasions, when private friends of each candidate and the members of the rival parties mustered their forces to vote entirely irrespectively of the merits of the case, when, the farce of hearing evidence having been gone through in an empty

[1] See much curious information about these abuses of privilege in Burgh's *Political Disquisitions; or, an Inquiry into Public Errors and Abuses* (Lond. 1774), i. pp. 205–235.

[2] Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, iv. 20–21. See, too, the chapters on Parliamentary Privilege in Hallam and Townsend.

[3] Sir E. May's *Const. Hist.* i. 307–308.

House, the Members, who had been waiting without, streamed in, often half intoxicated, to the division, and when the plainest and most incontestable testimony was set aside without scruple if it clashed with the party interests of the majority.[1] The evil had already become apparent in the latter days of William,[2] but some regard for appearances seems then to have been observed, and the partiality was shown chiefly in the very different degrees of stringency with which corruption was judged in the case of friend and foe. Soon, however, all shame was cast aside. In the Tory parliament of 1702, the controverted elections, in the words of Burnet, 'were judged in favour of Tories with such a barefaced partiality, that it showed the party was resolved on everything that might serve their ends.'[3] When the Whigs triumphed in 1705 they exhibited the same spirit, and in the few cases in which they did not decide in favour of the Whig candidate the result was ascribed exclusively to some private animosity.[4] Speaker Onslow, who for thirty-three years presided over the House with great dignity and integrity, declared that it had 'really come to be deemed by many a piece of virtue and honour to do injustice in these cases. "The right is in the friend and not in the cause" is almost avowed, and he is laughed at by the leaders of parties who has scruples upon it,' 'and yet,' he adds, 'we should not bear this a month in any other judicature in the kingdom, in any other object of jurisdiction, or—in this; but we do it ourselves and that sanctifies it, and the guilt is lost in the number of the guilty and the support of the party without doors.'[5] In the Parliament which met in 1728 there were nearly seventy election petitions to be tried, and Lord Hervey has left us an account of how the House discharged its functions. 'I believe,' he says, 'the manifest injustice and glaring violation of all truth in the decisions of this Parliament surpass even the most flagrant and infamous instances of any of their predecessors. They voted in one case forty more than ninety; in another they cut off the votes of about seven towns, and some thousand voters, who had not only been determined to have voices by former Committees of Elections, but

[1] *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 1064.
[2] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 162, 259.
[3] Ibid. p. 334.
[4] Ibid. p. 429.
[5] Onslow's note in *Burnet*, ii. 410.

had had their right of voting confirmed to them by the express words of an Act of Parliament and the authority of the whole Legislature. There was a string of these equitable determinations in about half a dozen instances, so unwarrantable and indefensible that people grew ashamed of pretending to talk of right and wrong, laughed at that for which they ought to have blushed, and declared that in elections they never considered the cause but the men, nor ever voted according to justice and right, but from solicitation and favour.'[1] The true character of these professedly judicial proceedings was so clearly recognised that a defeat in a division about the Chippenham election was the immediate cause of the resignation of Walpole, and the votes of the 'King's friends' against the Government in election cases formed, in the beginning of the next reign, one of the great complaints of Rockingham. A small majority, consisting mainly of the representatives of rotten boroughs, could thus easily convert itself into a large one, and override the plainest wishes of constituencies; and it is no exaggeration to say that a considerable proportion of the Members of the House of Commons owed their seats, not to the electors, but to the House itself.

Next to the existence of open constituencies, and a fair mode of election, the best security a nation can possess for the fidelity of its representatives is to be found in the system of parliamentary reporting. But this also was wanting. The theory of the statesmen of the first half of the eighteenth century was that the electors had no right to know the proceedings of their representatives, and it was only after a long and dangerous struggle, which was not terminated till the reign of George III., that the right of printing debates was virtually conceded. A few fragmentary reports, as early as the reign of Elizabeth, have come down to us; but the first systematic reporting dates from the Long Parliament, which in 1641 permitted it in a certain specified form. The reports appeared under the title of 'Diurnal Occurrences of Parliament,' and continued until the Restoration; but all unlicensed reporting was stringently forbidden, and the House even expelled and imprisoned in the Tower one of its

[1] Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 102, 103. See, too, Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, ii. 14, *Parl. Hist.* vi. 49, 50.

Members, Sir E. Dering, for printing, without permission, a collection of his own speeches. The secrecy of debate was originally intended as a protection from the King, but it was soon valued as a shelter from the supervision of the constituencies. At the Restoration all reporting was forbidden, though the votes and proceedings of the House were printed by direction of the Speaker, and from this time till the Revolution only a few relics of parliamentary debates were preserved. Andrew Marvell, the friend of Milton, and his assistant, as Secretary to Cromwell, sent regular reports to his constituents, from 1660 to 1678. Locke, at the suggestion of Shaftesbury, wrote a report of a debate which took place in the House of Lords in 1675, and he printed it under the title of 'A Letter from a Person of Quality to his Friend,' but, by order of the Privy Council, it was burnt by the hangman. Shaftesbury himself wrote some reports. Anchitell Grey, a Member for Derby, was accustomed for many years to take notes of the debates, which were published in 1769, and which form one of our most important sources of information about the period immediately following the Revolution. Occasionally a newsletter published an outline of what had occurred, but this was done in direct defiance of the resolutions of the House, and was often followed by a speedy punishment. In the latter years of Anne, however, the circle of political interests had very widely extended, and, to meet the demand, short summaries of parliamentary debates, compiled from recollections, began to appear every month in Boyer's 'Political State of Great Britain,' and in the following reign in the 'Historical Register.' Cave, who was one of the most enterprising booksellers of the eighteenth century, perceived the great popularity likely to be derived from such reports, and he showed great resolution in procuring them. In 1728 he was brought before the House of Commons, confined for several days, and obliged to apologise for having furnished his friend Robert Raikes with minutes of its proceedings for the use of the 'Gloucester Journal,' and at the same time the House passed a strong resolution, declaring such reports a breach of privilege. They were too popular, however, to be put down, and in the next year Raikes again incurred the censure of the House for the same offence. In 1731 Cave started the

'Gentleman's Magazine,' which was soon followed by its rival the 'London Magazine,' and in 1736 Cave began to make parliamentary reports a prominent feature of his periodical. He was accustomed to obtain entrance to the gallery of the House with a friend or two, to take down secretly the names of the speakers and the drift of their arguments, and then to repair at once to a neighbouring coffee-house, where, from the united recollections of the party, a rude report was compiled, which was afterwards elaborated and adorned by a more skilful writer. This latter function was at first fulfilled by a now forgotten historian named Guthrie. From November 1740 to February 1742-43 it was discharged by Dr. Johnson, and afterwards by Hawkesworth, the well-known editor of 'Travels' and biographer of Swift. Reports compiled in a somewhat similar manner, by a Scotch Presbyterian minister, named Gordon, appeared in the 'London Magazine,' and they speedily spread into different newspapers. To elude, if possible, the severity of the House, they only appeared during the recess, and only the first and last letters of the names of the speakers were given.[1]

The subject was brought before the House of Commons by the Speaker Onslow, in April 1738, and a debate ensued, of which a full report has been preserved. It is remarkable that the only speaker who adopted what we should now regard as the constitutional view of the subject was the Tory leader, Sir W. Windham. He concurred, indeed, in the condemnation of the reports that were appearing, but only on the ground of their frequent inaccuracy, and took occasion to say that 'he had indeed seen many speeches that were fairly and accurately taken; that no gentleman, where that is the case, ought to be ashamed that the world should know every word he speaks in this House,' 'that the public might have a right to know somewhat more of the proceedings of the House than what appears from the votes,' and that if he were sure that the sentiments of gentlemen were not misrepresented, he 'would be against coming to any resolution that would deprive them of a knowledge that is so necessary for their being able to judge of the merits of their representatives.'

[1] See Dr. Johnson's *Life of Cave*; Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, v. 1–18; May's *Constitutional History*, i. 421–422; and the History of Reporting, in Hunt's *Fourth Estate*, and Andrews' *Hist. of British Journalism*.

The language, however, of the other speakers was much more unqualified. 'If we do not put a speedy stop to this practice,' said Winnington, 'it will be looked upon without doors that we have no power to do it. . . . You will have every word that is spoken here misrepresented by fellows who thrust themselves into our gallery. You will have the speeches of this House every day printed, even during your Session, and we shall be looked upon as the most contemptible assembly on the face of the earth.' 'It is absolutely necessary,' said Pulteney, 'a stop should be put to the practice which has been so justly complained of. I think no appeals should be made to the public with regard to what is said in this assembly, and to print or publish the speeches of gentlemen in this House, even though they were not misrepresented, looks very like making them accountable without doors for what they say within.' Walpole was equally unqualified in his condemnation, but he dwelt exclusively on the inaccuracy and dishonesty of the reports, which were, no doubt, very great, and were a natural consequence of the way in which they were taken. 'I have read debates,' he said, 'in which I have been made to speak the very reverse of what I meant. I have read others of them wherein all the wit, the learning, and the argument has been thrown into one side, and on the other nothing but what was low, mean, and ridiculous, and yet when it comes to the question, the division has gone against the side which upon the face of the debate had reason and justice to support it.' 'You have punished some persons for forging the names of gentlemen on the backs of letters; but this is a forgery of a worse kind, for it misrepresents the sense of Parliament, and imposes on the understanding of the whole nation.' The result of the debate was a unanimous resolution 'that it is a high indignity to, and a notorious breach of the privileges of this House' to print the debates or other proceedings of the House 'as well during the recess as the sitting of Parliament, and that this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offenders.'[1]

The threat was only partially effectual. Cave continued the publication in a new form, as 'Debates in the Senate of Great Lilliput,' and substituted extravagant fancy names for the

[1] *Parl. Hist.* x. pp. 800–811. Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, ch. 50.

initials of the speakers. In the 'London Magazine,' debates 'of the Political Club' appeared, and the affairs of the nation were discussed under a transparent disguise by personages in Roman history. Meagre, inaccurate, and often obscure, as these reports necessarily were, they were still very popular; but there was no small risk in producing them. Careful disguise was necessary, and Cave thought it henceforth advisable to print under the name of his nephew. In 1747 the editors of both magazines were summoned before the House of Lords for having given an account of Lord Lovat's trial, and they only escaped imprisonment by an abject apology. In 1752 Cave returned to the former plan of inserting initials of the speakers, and he does not appear to have been again molested during the short remainder of his life.[1] Many other printers, however, were summoned before the battle was finally won. So jealous was the House of everything that could enable the constituencies to keep a watchful eye upon their representatives, that it was only in the eighteenth century that the votes of the House were printed without formal permission,[2] while the names of the Members who had voted were wholly concealed. In 1696 the publication of the names of a minority was voted a breach of privilege 'destructive to the freedom and liberties of Parliament.' During almost the whole of the eighteenth century the publication of division lists was a rare and exceptional thing, due to the exertions of individual Members, and it was not until 1836 that it was undertaken by the House itself.[3]

The system of Parliamentary reporting contributed, perhaps, more than any other influence to mitigate the glaring corruption of Parliament, for although several laws dealing directly with

[1] He died Jan. 1754.

[2] In the discussion on the publication of debates, to which I have just referred, Pulteney is reported to have said: 'I remember the time when this House was so jealous, so cautious of doing anything that might look like an appeal to their constituents, that not even the votes were printed without leave. A gentleman every day rose in his place and desired the Chair to ask leave of the House that their votes for that day should be printed. How this custom came to be dropped I cannot so well account for, but I think it high time for us to prevent any further encroachment upon our privileges.'—*Parl. Hist.* x. 806–807. In 1703, during the discussions of the House of Commons with the Lords, the former passed a resolution 'that the votes of the House should not be printed, and that this might be a standing order.' Boyer's *Queen Anne*, p. 47..

[3] May's *Constitutional Hist.* i. 439–441.

the evil were enacted in obedience to the clamour out-of-doors, they were allowed to a very large extent to remain inoperative. It was useless to arraign offenders before a tribunal of accomplices, and as long as the Executive and the majority in Parliament conspired to practise and to shelter corruption, laws against it were a dead letter. Bribery at elections had been condemned by a law of William III.,[1] and another measure of great stringency was carried against it in 1729. By this law any elector might be compelled on demand to take an oath swearing that he had received no bribe to influence his vote, and any person who was convicted of either giving or receiving a bribe at elections was deprived for ever of the franchise and fined 500*l.* unless he purchased indemnity by discovering another offender of the same kind.[2] Some measures had also been taken to limit the number of placemen and pensioners in Parliament. In 1692 a Bill for expelling all who accepted places after a certain date from the House of Commons passed that House, but was rejected in the Lords. In 1693, after undergoing material alterations it was carried through both Houses, but vetoed by the Crown. In 1694 a new Place Bill was introduced, but this time it was defeated in the Commons. A clause of the Act of Settlement, however, carried out the principle in the most rigid form, providing that after the accession of the House of Hanover no person who held any office, place of profit, or pension from the King should have a seat in the House of Commons, but this clause, which would have banished the ministers from the popular branch of the Legislature, never came into operation. It was repealed in 1706, while Anne was still on the throne, and replaced by a law providing that every Member of the House of Commons who accepted office under the Crown should be compelled to vacate his seat and could only sit after re-election. Occasionally, when a new class of offices was created, its members were incapacitated by law from sitting in the House of Commons. Thus in 1694, when certain duties on salt, beer, and other liquors were granted for the purpose of carrying on the war with France, it was enacted that no Member of the House of Commons might be concerned in farming, collecting, or

[1] 7 William III. c. 4.

[2] 2 George II. c. 24. See *Parl. Hist.* xii. 648. Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, ii. 382–384.

managing any of the sums granted to his Majesty by this Act 'except the Commissioners of the Treasury, Customs, and Excise, not exceeding the present number in each office, and the Commissioners of the land tax.' In 1700 all Commissioners and other officers of the Customs were disqualified from sitting in the House, and the Act of 1706 extended the disability to all offices created after that date, limited the number of Commissioners appointed to execute any office, and excluded all who held pensions from the Crown during pleasure. Under George I. this exclusion was extended to those who held pensions during a term of years. Had these laws been enforced, they would have done very much to purify Parliament, but the pension bills at least, were treated with complete contempt. The pensions were secret. The Government refused all information concerning them. A Bill was three times brought forward compelling every Member to swear that he was not in receipt of such a pension, and that if he accepted one he would within fourteen days disclose it to the House, but by the influence of Walpole it was three times defeated. A similar fate during the Walpole administration befell Bills for restricting the number of placemen in the House, but in the great outburst of popular indignation that followed his downfall one measure of this kind was carried. The Place Bill of 1743 excluded a certain number of inferior placeholders from Parliament, and in some degree mitigated the evil.[1] It was, however, the only step that was taken. Pelham would, probably, never have corrupted Parliament had he found it pure,[2] but he inherited a system of corruption, and he bequeathed it almost intact to his successors.

The efforts that were made to shorten the duration of Parliament were still less successful. We have already seen the chief reasons that induced the Whig party to pass the Septennial Act, and some of the results which it produced. Its beneficial effect in repressing disorder and immorality, in giving a new

[1] See Hallam's *Const. Hist.* ch. xv. and xvi. Fischel on the *English Constitution*, p. 433.

[2] Horace Walpole, who hated Pelham, and always put the worst colouring on his acts, admitted this. He says: 'I believe Mr. Pelham would never have wet his finger in corruption if Sir R. Walpole had not dipped up to the elbow; but as he did dip, and as Mr. Pelham was persuaded that it was as necessary for him to be minister as it was for Sir R. Walpole, he plunged as deep.'—Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. 235.

stability to English policy, a new strength to the dynasty, and a new authority to the House of Commons, can never be forgotten. It was accompanied, however, by no measure of parliamentary reform, and it had the inevitable effect of greatly increasing corruption both at elections and in the House. The price of seats at once rose when their tenure was prolonged, and the change in the class of candidates which had been in progress since the Revolution was greatly accelerated. In most rural constituencies it was impossible, when elections were very frequent, for any stranger to compete with the steady influence of the resident landlord. When, however, elections became comparatively rare, money became in many districts more powerful than influence. The value of the prize being enhanced, men were prepared to give more to obtain it; and rich merchants, coming down to constituencies where they were perfect strangers, were able, by the expenditure of large sums at long intervals, to wrest the representation from the resident gentry. At the same time, the means of corruption at the disposal of the Government were enormously increased. It was a common thing for a minister to endeavour to buy the vote of a new Member by the offer of a pension. Under the old system the Member knew that in three years he would be called to account by his constituents, and might lose both his pension and his seat. By the Septennial Act the value of the bribe was more than doubled, for its enjoyment was virtually secured for seven years.

To these arguments it was added that the Septennial Act had a social influence which was far from beneficial. Then as now Parliament contributed largely to set the tone of manners. Under the former system a landlord who aspired to a political position found an almost constant residence on his estate indispensable. When Parliaments became less frequent the necessity grew less stringent, and it was noticed as a consequence of the Septennial Act that country gentlemen were accustomed to spend much more of their time and fortune than formerly in the metropolis.

There can, however, I think, be little doubt that the Government were right in maintaining the Septennial Act, and that a return to the system which had rendered English politics so

anarchical in the closing years of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century would have produced more evils than it could have cured. It is a remarkable illustration of the changes that may pass over party warfare, that the Republican Milton at one time advocated the appointment of Members for life;[1] that the Tory party under Walpole and Pelham advocated triennial and even annual Parliaments, which afterwards became the watchwords of the most extreme radicals; that the Whigs, taking their stand upon the Septennial Act, contended against the Tories for the greater duration of Parliament, and that a reform which was demanded as of capital importance by the Tories under George I. and George II., and by the Radicals in the succeeding reigns, has at present scarcely a champion in England. It must, however, be added that recent reforms have considerably diminished the average duration of Parliaments, and that since the Septennial Act there had been only one instance of a premature dissolution[2] before 1784. In the early part of the eighteenth century the proposed reduction of the duration of Parliaments was very popular throughout the country. It was supported with great power by Sir W. Windham in 1734, and in 1745 a motion for annual Parliaments was only defeated by 145 to 113.

It is not easy to understand how a Parliament so thoroughly vicious in its constitution, so narrow, corrupt, and often despotic in its tendencies as that which I have described, should have proved itself, in any degree, a faithful guardian of English liberty, or should have produced so large an amount of wise, temperate, and tolerant legislation as it unquestionably did. Reasoning from its constitution and from some of its acts, we might have supposed that it would be wholly inaccessible to public opinion, and would have established a system of the most absolute and most ignoble tyranny; yet no one who candidly considers the general tenour of English administration during the long period of Whig ascendancy in the eighteenth century can question that Voltaire and Montesquieu were correct in describing it as greatly superior to the chief governments of the Continent. In truth the merits of a government depend much more upon

[1] See his *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Commonwealth.*
[2] In 1747.

the character of men than upon the framework of institutions. There have been legislative bodies, constructed on the largest, freest, and most symmetrical plan, which have been the passive instruments of despotism; and there have been others which, though saturated with corruption and disfigured by every description of anomaly, have never wholly lost their popular character. The parliamentary system at the time we are considering was a government by the upper classes of the nation; those classes possessed in an eminent degree political capacity, and although public spirit had sunk very low among them, it was by no means extinguished. Men who on ordinary occasions voted through party or personal motives rose on great emergencies to real patriotism. The enthusiasm and the genius of the country aspired in a great degree to political life; and large boroughowners, who disposed of some seats for money and of others for the aggrandisement of their families, were accustomed also, through mingled motives of patriotism and vanity, to bring forward young men of character and promise. Even if they restricted their patronage to their sons they at least provided that many young men should be in the House, and they thus secured the materials of efficient legislators. Statesmanship is not like poetry, or some of the other forms of higher literature, which can only be brought to perfection by men endowed with extraordinary natural genius. The art of management, whether applied to public business or to assemblies, lies strictly within the limits of education, and what is required is much less transcendent abilities than early practice, tact, courage, good temper, courtesy, and industry. In the immense majority of cases the function of statesmen is not creative, and its excellence lies much more in execution than in conception. In politics possible combinations are usually few, and the course that should be pursued is sufficiently obvious. It is the management of details, the necessity of surmounting difficulties, that chiefly taxes the abilities of statesmen, and these things can to a very large degree be acquired by practice. The natural capacities, even of a Walpole, a Palmerston, or a Peel, were far short of prodigy or genius. Imperfect and vicious as was the system of parliamentary government, it at least secured a school of statesmen quite competent for the management

of affairs, and the reign of corruption among them, though very threatening, was by no means absolute. Among the rich who purchased their seats there were always some few who were actuated by an earnest desire to benefit their country, and who, like Romilly and Flood, chose this way of entering Parliament as that which made them most independent. The county representation continued tolerably pure;[1] of the other constituencies a proportion, though a small proportion, were really free, and some of these, through the operation of the scot and lot franchise, which was equivalent to household suffrage, were eminently popular. All placemen did not always vote with the Government, and all the forms of corruption did not act in the same direction. There was not much public spirit exhibited, but there was always some, and there was much of that spirit of moderation and compromise, that aversion to raising dangerous questions or disturbing old customs, that anxiety not to strain allegiance or abuse strength, or carry political conflicts to extremities, which has almost always characterised English politics, and which Walpole had done more than any other single man to sustain. Besides this, the influence of the House of Lords and a network of old customs, associations, and traditions opposed formidable barriers to precipitate or violent action. As Burke once said with profound truth, 'it is of the nature of a constitution so formed as ours, however clumsy the constituent parts, if set together in action, ultimately to act well.'

But perhaps the most important guarantee of tolerable government in England was the fear of the Pretender. During all the early years of the Hanoverian dynasty, it was more probable than otherwise that the Stuarts would be restored, and it was only by carefully and constantly abstaining from every course that could arouse violent hostility that the tottering dynasty could be kept upon the throne. This was the ever present check upon the despotism of majorities, the great secret of the deference

[1] Chatham, in a speech which he made in 1770, while dwelling strongly on the corruption of the small boroughs, added: 'The representation of the counties is, I think, still pure and uncorrupted, that of the great cities is upon a footing equally respectable, and there are many of the larger trading towns which still preserve their independence.'—*Anecdotes of Chatham*, ii. 35.

of Parliament to the wishes of the people. The conciliatory ministry of Walpole turned the balance of probabilities in favour of the reigning family, but the danger was not really averted till after Culloden, and the Jacobite party did not cease to be a political force till the great ministry of Pitt. There were persons of high position—the most noted being the Duke of Beaufort—who were believed every year to send large sums to the Pretender. Jacobite cries were loud and frequent during the riots that followed the Bill for naturalising Jews in 1753. The University of Oxford was still profoundly disaffected. Complaints were made in Parliament in 1754 of treasonable songs sung by the students in the streets, of treasonable prints sold in its shops.[1] Dr. King, whose sentiments were not doubtful, in his speech on opening the Ratcliffe Library in 1754, introduced three times the word 'redeat,' pausing each time for a considerable space while the crowded theatre rang with applause.[2] As late as 1756, when Lord Fitzmaurice travelled through Scotland, he observed that the people of that country were still generally Jacobite.[3]

Such a state of affairs was well fitted to moderate the violence of parties. The people had little power of controlling or directly influencing Parliament, but whenever their sentiments were strongly expressed on any particular question, either by the votes of the free constituencies or by more irregular or tumultuous means, they were usually listened to, and on the whole obeyed. The explosions of public indignation about the Sacheverell case, the Peace of Utrecht, the commercial treaty with France, the South Sea Bubble, the Spanish outrages, the Bill for naturalising the Jews, the Hanoverian policy of Carteret, foolish as in most instances they were, had all of them, at least, a great and immediate effect upon the policy of the country. It should be added that the duties of Government were in some respects much easier than at present. The vast development of the British Empire and of manufacturing industry, the extension of publicity, and the growth of an inquiring and philanthropic spirit that discerns abuses in every

[1] Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. p. 413. See, too, Smollett's *Hist.* book iii. ch. 1.

[2] Lord Shelburne's *Life*, i. p. 35. See too, on Oxford disaffection at an earlier period, the description of the Excise riots. Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 205.

[3] Lord Shelburne's *Life*, i. p. 50.

quarter, have together immeasurably increased both the range and the complexity of legislation. In the early Hanoverian period the number of questions treated was very small, and few subjects were much attended to which did not directly affect party interests.

The general level of political life was, however, deplorably low. Politics under Queen Anne centred chiefly round the favourites of the sovereign, and in the first Hanoverian reigns the most important influences were Court intrigues or parliamentary corruption. Bolingbroke secured his return from exile by the assistance of the Duchess of Kendal, one of the mistresses of George I., whom he is said to have bribed with 10,000*l.* Carteret at first based his hopes upon the same support, but imagining that he had met with coldness or infidelity on the part of the Duchess, he transferred his allegiance to her rival, the Countess of Platen.[1] On the death of George I. a crowd of statesmen and writers—Chesterfield, Pulteney, Swift, Bolingbroke, and Gay—were at the feet of Mrs. Howard, the mistress of the new king. A curious letter has been preserved, in which Mrs. Pitt, the mother of the great Lord Chatham, endeavoured by a bribe of 1,000 guineas to obtain from her, for her brother, the position of Lord of the Bedchamber.[2] Chesterfield, towards the end of his career, intrigued against Newcastle with the Duchess of Yarmouth; and Pitt himself is stated, on very good authority, to have secured his position in the Cabinet in a great degree by his attentions to the same lady.[3] The power of Walpole and Newcastle rested upon a different but hardly upon a nobler basis—upon the uniform employment of all the patronage of the Crown, and of a large proportion of the public money at their disposal, for the purpose of maintaining a parliamentary majority. Weapons we should now regard as in the highest degree dishonourable were freely employed. The secrecy of the Post Office was habitually violated. The letters of Swift, Bolingbroke, Marlborough, and Pope are full of complaints of its insecurity, and we know from Walpole himself that he had no scruple in opening the letters of a political rival.[4]

[1] *Marchmont Papers*, i. 3–5.

[2] Suffolk *Correspondence*, i. 102.

[3] See the very remarkable passages on this subject in Lord Shelburne's *Autobiography*, pp. 83–84. Mrs. Montagu's *Letters*, iv. 46.

[4] Writing to Lord Townshend, Nov. 29, 1725, Walpole says: 'It is fit

Of these facts that which is most really important is the manner in which the Crown patronage and secret service money were disposed of. The system of habitually neglecting the moral and intellectual interests of the country, and of employing the resources of the Government solely with a view to strengthening political influence, was chiefly due to Walpole and Newcastle, and it was one which had very wide and very important consequences. The best argument that has ever been urged in favour of leaving at the disposal of the Government large sums of money in the form of pensions, sinecures, and secret service money, is that the Government is the trustee of the nation, and that it should employ at least a portion of these funds in encouraging those higher forms of literature, science, or art, which are of the greatest value to mankind, which can only be attained by the union of extraordinary abilities with extraordinary labour, and which are at the same time of such a nature that they produce no adequate remuneration for those who practise them. It has been contended, with reason, that it is neither just nor politic that great philosophers, or poets, or men of science should be driven by the pressure of want from the fields of labour to which their genius naturally called them, or should be tempted to degrade the rarest and most inestimable talents, in order by winning popularity to obtain a livelihood, or should be deprived, when pursuing investigations of the highest moment to mankind, of the means of research which easy circumstances can furnish. That each man should obtain the due and proportionate reward of his services to the community is an ideal which no society can ever attain, but towards which every society in a healthy condition must endeavour to approxi-

you should likewise be acquainted that the Pulteneys build great hopes upon the difficulties they promise themselves will arise from the foreign affairs, and especially from the Hanover treaty. I had a curiosity to open some of their letters and found them full of this language. The last foreign mail brought a letter from Count Staremberg to William Pulteney, giving him great expectations of the materials he could furnish him with, when it might be done with safety, and very strong in general terms upon what is transacting with you. Wise Daniel fills all his inland correspondence with reflections of the same kind.'—Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 492–493. See, too, *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 205, 245, 248. Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. xcvii. c. Chatham *Correspondence*, i. 167–168. Swift's *Correspondence*.

In 1723 Walpole even succeeded in making an arrangement with the Postmaster-General in Brussels to open and send him copies of all the correspondence of Atterbury. Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 284.

mate; and although in matters of material production, of which common men are good judges, the law of supply and demand may at least be trusted to produce the requisite article in sufficient quantity and of tolerable quality, it is quite otherwise with the things of mind. In these fields reward is often in inverse proportion to merit, and many of the qualities that are of the most incontestable value have a direct tendency to diminish popularity. As a great writer has truly said 'the writings by which one can live are not the writings which themselves live.' To infuse into a book deep thought that will strain the attention of the reader, to defend unpopular opinions, or open new veins of thought, to condense into a small space the reflections and researches of a lifetime, to grapple with subjects that involve subtle distinctions or close and complicated reasoning, is a course plainly contrary to the pecuniary interest of an author. The discoveries and the books which have proved of the most enduring value, have usually at first been only appreciated by a very few, and have only emerged into general notoriety after many years of eclipse. A skilful writer who looks only to the market, will speedily perceive that the taste of the great majority of readers is an uncultivated one, and that if he desires to be popular he must labour deliberately to gratify it. If his talent take the form of books he will expand his thoughts into many brilliant, gaudy, and superficial volumes, rapidly written and easily read, and, remembering that most men read only for amusement, he will avoid every subject that can fatigue attention or shock prejudices, and especially every form of profound, minute, and laborious investigation. There are demagogues in literature as well as in politics. There is a degradation of style springing from a thirst for popularity, which is at least as bad as the pedantry of scholars, and a desire to conform to middle-class prejudices may produce quite as real a servility as the patronage of aristocracies or of courts. The inevitable result of the law of supply and demand, if left without restriction, is either to degrade or destroy both literature and science, or else to throw them exclusively into the hands of those who possess private means of subsistence. This is not a matter of speculation or of controversy, but of fact, and anyone who is even moderately acquainted with literary or scientific biography

may abundantly verify it. It is certain that the higher forms of literature and science are as a rule unsupporting, that men of extraordinary abilities have spent the most useful and laborious lives in these pursuits without earning the barest competence, that many of the most splendid works of genius and many of the most fruitful and conscientious researches are due to men whose lives were passed between the garret and the spunging house, and who were reduced to a penury sometimes verging upon starvation. Neither Bacon, nor Newton, nor Locke, nor Descartes, nor Gibbon, nor Hume, nor Adam Smith, nor Montesquieu, nor Berkeley, nor Butler, nor Coleridge, nor Bentham, nor Milton, nor Wordsworth, could have made a livelihood by their works, and the same may be said of all, or nearly all, writers on mathematics, metaphysics, political economy, archæology, and physical science in all its branches, as well as of the great majority of the greatest writers in other fields. Very few of those men whose genius has irradiated nations, and whose writings have become the eternal heritage of mankind, obtained from their works the income of a successful village doctor or provincial attorney.

In truth, the fact that for many years a main object of English politicians has been to abolish the foolish restrictions by which commerce was hampered, has produced among large classes, by a process of hasty generalisation which is very familiar to all who have studied the history of opinions, a belief in the all-sufficiency of the law of supply and demand, and in the uselessness of government interference, which in speculation is one of the most superficial of fallacies, and in practice one of the most deadly of errors. Even in the sphere of material things this optimist notion egregiously fails. No portions of modern legislation have been more useful or indeed more indispensable than the Factory Acts and the many restrictive laws about the sale of poisons, vaccination, drainage, railways, or adulteration, and few men who observe the signs of the times will question that this description of legislation must one day be greatly extended. But in other spheres of the utmost importance, the law of supply and demand is far more conspicuously impotent. Thus education in its simplest form, which is one of the first and highest of all human interests, is a

matter in which Government initiation and direction are imperatively required, for uninstructed people will never demand it, and to appreciate education is itself a consequence of education. Thus the higher forms of literature and science cannot be left to the unrestricted law of supply and demand, for the simple reason that, while they are of the utmost importance to mankind, most of their professors under such a system would starve. No reasonable man will question either that a civilisation is mutilated and imperfect in which a considerable number of men of genius do not devote their lives to these subjects, or that the world owes quite as much to its writers and men of science as it does to its statesmen, its generals, or its lawyers. No reasonable man who remembers on the one hand how small a proportion of mankind possess the strong natural aptitude which produces the highest achievements in science or literature, and on the other hand how inestimable and enduring are the benefits they may confer, will desire that the cultivation of these fields should become the monopoly of the rich. To evoke the latent genius of the nation, and to direct it to the spheres in which it is most fitted to excel, is one of the highest ends of enlightened statesmanship. In every community there exists a vast mass of noble capacity hopelessly crushed by adverse circumstances, or enabled only to develop in a tardy, distorted, and imperfect manner. Every institution or system that enables a poor man who possesses a strong natural genius for science or literature, to acquire the requisite instruction, and to develop his distinctive capabilities instead of seeking a livelihood as a second-rate lawyer or tradesman, is conferring a benefit on the human race. The benefit is so great that an institution is justified if it occasionally accomplishes it, even though in the great majority of cases it proves a failure. It is, no doubt, true that these unremunerative pursuits may often be combined with more lucrative employments, but only where such employments are congenial, and allow an unusual leisure for thought and study, and even then a divided allegiance is seldom compatible with the highest results. It is also true that men of great natural powers will sometimes follow their guiding light in spite of every obstacle. The martyrs of literature who pursued their path through hopeless poverty to ends of the highest value to

mankind, have been scarcely less memorable than those of religion. But apart from all nobler and more generous considerations, it is not for the benefit of society that these fields of labour should be cultivated only by those who possess a far higher amount of self-sacrifice than is demanded in other spheres, or that men whose influence may mould the characters of succeeding generations should exercise that influence, with hearts acidulated and perhaps depraved by the pains of poverty or the sense of wrong. It is difficult to over-estimate the amount of evil in the world which has sprung from vices in literature that may be distinctly traced to the circumstances of the author. Had Rousseau been a happy and a prosperous man, the whole history of modern Europe might have been changed.

A curious and valuable book might be written describing the provisions which have been made in different nations and ages for the support of these unremunerative forms of talent. In Germany at the present day the immense multiplication of professorships provides a natural sphere for their exertions; but the results of this system would have been less satisfactory had not the general simplicity of habits, the cheapness of living, and the low standard of professional remuneration made such a life hitherto attractive to able men. In England several agencies combine directly or indirectly to the same end. The vast emoluments of the Universities enable them to do something. In the eyes of a superficial economist no institution will appear more indefensible than an English fellowship to which no definite duties whatever are attached. A real statesman will probably think that something, at least, may be said for émoluments which, won by severe competition, give a young man a subsistence during the first unproductive years of a profession, render possible for him lines of study or employment from which he would otherwise be absolutely excluded, and enable him, if he desires it, during some of the best years of his life to devote his undivided energies to intellectual labours. The endowments, whether derived from public or private sources, which are attached to scientific careers, at least furnish the means of subsistence to some men who are engaged in studies of the most transcendent importance. They are, however, miserably inadequate, and this inadequacy diverts from scientific

pursuits many who are admirably fitted to follow them, compels many others to turn away from original investigation, and depresses the whole subject in the eyes of those large classes who estimate the relative importance of different branches of knowledge by the magnitude of the emoluments attached to them. Hardly any other of the great branches of human knowledge is at present so backward, tentative, and empirical as medicine, and there is not much doubt that the law of supply and demand is a main cause of the defect. Almost all the finer intellects which are devoted to this subject are turned away from independent investigations to the lucrative paths of professional practice; their time is engrossed with cases most of which could be treated quite as well by men of inferior capacity, and they do little or nothing to enlarge the bounds of our knowledge. For literature of the graver kinds the Church provides important, though indirect assistance. In many country parishes the faithful discharge of clerical duties is quite compatible with the life of a scholar; and the valuable, dignified, and almost sinecure appointments connected with the Cathedrals are peculiarly suited for literary rewards. Solid literary attainments usually lead to them, and to the tranquil leisure which they secure we owe, perhaps, the greater number of those noble monuments of learning which are the truest glory of the Anglican Church.

The disadvantages attaching to this system of providing for literature by ecclesiastical appointments are sufficiently obvious. Such rewards are restricted to men of only one class of opinions, are offered for proficiency only in special forms of literature, and have a direct tendency to discourage independence of thought. They are open to the grave objection of constituting a gigantic system of bribery in favour of a certain class of opinions, and of inducing many who are not conscious hypocrites to stifle their doubts and act falsely with their intellects. To the poor, ambitious, and unbelieving scholar, the Church holds out prospects of the most seductive nature, and he must often hear the voice of the tempter murmuring in his ear, 'All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' But, grave as are these disadvantages, the literary benefits resulting from Church sinecures, in my judg-

ment, outweigh them, and they will continue to do so as long as the Church maintains her present latitude of belief, and as long as a considerable proportion of able men can conscientiously join her communion. These appointments have, as a matter of fact, produced many works of great and sterling value, which would never have been written without them, and which are of great benefit to men of all classes and opinions. They discharge a function of the utmost importance in English life, for they form the principal counterpoise to the great prizes attached to the law and to commerce, which would otherwise divert a very disproportionate amount of the talent of the community into these channels. They are especially valuable as encouraging deep research and considerable literary enterprise at a period when, under the influence of the law of supply and demand, literary talent is passing, to a most excessive and deplorable degree, into ephemeral or purely critical writing. Apart from all its other effects, valuable Church patronage, if judiciously employed, may be of inestimable intellectual advantage to the nation. An ingenious man may easily imagine institutions that would confer the same advantages without the attending evils; but ecclesiastical appointments exist; they actually discharge these functions, and it would be practically much more easy to destroy than to replace them. Strong popular enthusiasm may be speedily aroused for the defence or the destruction of an establishment, but considerations such as I am now urging are of too refined a nature ever to become popular. They are never likely to furnish election cries or party watchwords, and the creation of lucrative appointments, without adequate and engrossing duties being definitely attached to them, is too much opposed to all democratic notions to be in our day a possibility.

Among the means of encouraging the higher intellectual influences, direct Government patronage was in the early part of the eighteenth century conspicuous, and it was bestowed, on the whole, with much disregard of party considerations. Whigs and Tories were in this respect about equally liberal, the Whigs Somers and Montague, and the Tories Harley and St. John being, perhaps, the ministers to whom literature owed most. It was the received opinion of the time that it was part

of the duty of an English minister to encourage the development of promising talent, and that a certain proportion of the places and pensions at his disposal should be applied to this purpose. No doubt, this system was sometimes abused, and sometimes had a bad effect upon the character of the recipient; but in itself it implied no degradation. Many of the kinds of labour assisted were of such a nature as to leave no room for sycophancy, and could not otherwise have been carried on, and the practical results were in general eminently beneficial. The splendid efflorescence of genius under Queen Anne was in a very great degree due to ministerial encouragement, which smoothed the path of many whose names and writings are familiar in countless households, where the statesmen of that day are almost forgotten. Among those who obtained assistance from the Government, either in the form of pensions, appointments, or professional promotion, were Newton and Locke, Addison, Swift, Steele, Prior, Gay, Rowe, Congreve, Tickell, Parnell, and Phillips, while a secret pension was offered to Pope, who was legally disqualified by his religion from receiving Government favours. Upon the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, however, Governmental encouragement of literature almost absolutely ceased. It is somewhat singular that the son of the Electress Sophia, who had been the devoted friend of Leibnitz, and the nephew of Elizabeth of Bavaria, who had been the most ardent disciple of Descartes, should have proved himself, beyond all other English sovereigns, indifferent to intellectual interests; but George I. never exhibited any trace of the qualities that had made his mother one of the most brilliant, and his aunt one of the most learned, women in Europe. The influence of Walpole was in this respect still more fatal. Himself wholly destitute of literary tastes, he was altogether indifferent to this portion of the national development, and he looked upon the vast patronage at his disposal merely as a means of Parliamentary corruption, of aggrandising his own family, or of providing for the younger sons of the aristocracy. It has been said that one of the great distinctions between ancient and modern political theories is, that in the one the ends proposed were chiefly moral, and in the other almost exclusively material; and this last description, though it does not

apply to every portion of English history, was eminently true of the reigns of George I. and of his successor.

It can never be a matter of indifference to a country what qualities lead naturally to social eminence, and it was a necessary consequence of this neglect of literature that a great change passed over the social position of its possessors. Formerly high intellectual attainments counted in society for almost as much as rank or wealth. Addison had been made a Secretary of State. Prior had been despatched on important embassies. Swift had powerfully influenced the policy of a ministry. Steele was a conspicuous Member of Parliament. Gay was made Secretary to the English ambassador at the Court of Hanover. In the reign of the first two Georges all this changed. The Government, if it helped any authors, helped only those who would employ their talents in the lowest forms of party libel, and even then on the most penurious scale. The public was still too small to make literature remunerative. The great nobles, who took their tone from the Court and Government, no longer patronised it, and the men of the highest genius or of the greatest learning were the slaves of mercenary booksellers, wasted the greater part of their lives in the most miserable literary drudgery, lived in abject poverty, and rarely came in contact with the great, except in the character of suppliants. It was in the reign of George I. that Steele, struck down by the ingratitude of the party he had so faithfully served, closed a career, which had been pre-eminently useful to his country, in poverty and neglect; that Ockley concluded his 'History of the Saracens' in a debtor's prison; that Bingham composed the greater part of his invaluable work on the 'Antiquities of the Christian Church' in such necessity that it was with the utmost difficulty he could obtain the books that were indispensable to his task. It was in the reign of George II. that Savage used to wander by night through the streets of London for want of a lodging, that Johnson spent more than thirty years in penury, drudgery, or debt, that Thomson was deprived by Lord Hardwicke of the small place in the Court of Chancery which was his sole means of subsistence, that Smollett was compelled to degrade his noble genius to unworthy political libels, and at last, after a life

which was one long struggle for bread, died in utter poverty in a foreign land. And at this very time literature in the neighbouring country had acquired a greater social influence than in any other period of recorded history. No contrast, indeed, can be more complete than that which was in this respect presented by England and France. That brilliant French society which Rousseau[1] and so many others have painted, was, no doubt, in many respects corrupt, frivolous, and chimerical, but it had at least carried the art of intellectual conversation to an almost unexampled perfection, and it was pervaded and dignified by a genuine passion and enthusiasm for knowledge, by a noble, if delusive confidence in the power of intellect to regenerate mankind. This intellectual tone was wholly wanting in society in England. Horace Walpole, who reflected very faithfully the fashionable spirit of his time, always speaks of literary pursuits as something hardly becoming in a gentleman, and of such men as Johnson and Smollett as if they were utterly contemptible. The change in the position of writers was at least as injurious to society as to literature. It gave it a frivolous, unintellectual, and material tone it has never wholly lost.[2]

We must, however, make an exception to this censure. The influence of Queen Caroline in patronage was for many years most judiciously exercised. This very remarkable woman, who governed her husband with an absolute sway in spite of his infidelities, and who often exhibited an insight into character, a force of expression, and a political judgment worthy

[1] *Nouvelle Heloïse*, 2me partie. See, too, the admirable sketch of French society at this period in Taine's *Ancien Régime*.

[2] Chesterfield has noticed the contrast in the usual conversation of the fashionable circles of the two capitals. 'It must be owned that the polite conversation of the men and women of fashion in Paris, though not always very deep, is much less futile and frivolous than ours here. It turns at least upon some subject, something of taste, some point of history, criticism, and even philosophy; which, though probably not quite so solid as Mr. Locke's, is, however, better and more becoming rational beings than our frivolous dissertations upon the weather or upon whist.'—*Letters to his Son*, April 22, 1752.

So another writer observes, 'A knowledge of books, a taste in arts, a proficiency in science, was formerly regarded as a proper qualification in a man of fashion. . . . It will not, I presume, be regarded as any kind of satire on the present age to say that among the higher ranks this literary spirit is generally vanished. Reading is now sunk at best into a morning's amusement.'—Browne's *Estimate of the Times*, i. 41–42.

of a great statesman, was the firmest of all the friends of Walpole, and deserves a large share of the credit which is given to his administration. She first fully reconciled her husband to him. "She supported him through innumerable intrigues, and every act of policy was determined together by the minister and the Queen before it was submitted to the King. Unlike Walpole, however, and unlike her husband, who despised every form of literature and art, she had strong intellectual sympathies, which she sometimes displayed with a little pedantry, but which on the whole she exercised to the great advantage of the community. She was the friend and correspondent of Leibnitz,[1] and, in spite of the ridicule of many of the English nobles, the warm and steady patron of Handel. By her influence the poet Savage, when under sentence of death, received his pardon, the Nonjuror historian Carte was recalled from exile, the Arian Whiston was assisted by a pension. Her generosity was at once wide and discriminating and singularly unfettered by the prejudices of her time. She secured for the Scotch Jacobites at Edinburgh permission to worship in peace, and although her own views were as far as possible removed from their theology[2] she was a special benefactress of the persecuted Catholics. She contributed largely from her private means to encourage needy talent, and she exercised a great and most useful influence upon Church patronage. There has seldom been a time in which the religious tone was lower than in the age of the first two Georges, but it is a remarkable fact that this age can boast of the two greatest intellects that have ever adorned the Protestant Episcopate.

[1] It is curious how extremely badly she wrote French. Her letters are so misspelt and ungrammatical as to be sometimes nearly unintelligible, and she always chose that language for corresponding with Leibnitz. The following specimen from one of her letters to Leibnitz gives an idea of her attainments in two languages in 1715: 'Vous aurais remarqué dans le raport contre le dernier minister que le feu Lord Boulinbrouck dit que les francois sont ausy mechant poette que les anglois politicien. Je suis pourtant fort pour ceu de cornelle, Racine, beaulau, Rénié. Il se peut que ne possitan pas sy bien la langue anglois que la francoise j'admire plus se que j'antan.'—Kemble's *State Papers and Letters*, p. 532.

[2] She had refused to marry the Archduke Charles, afterwards Emperor, because he was a Catholic and she could not change her faith. Gay wrote of her—

> The pomp of titles easy faith might shake.
> She scorned an empire for religion's sake.

She appears, however, to have had very little religious feeling, and her opinions on those subjects, as far as she had any, were of a latitudinarian cast.

Butler was drawn from his retirement by Caroline, was appointed chaplain and recommended by her on her death-bed, and to that recommendation he himself attributed his subsequent promotion. Berkeley was first offered a bishopric by the Queen, but being at this time absorbed by his famous missionary scheme he declined it. She tried also earnestly and repeatedly to induce Clarke to accept a seat on the bench, but he resolutely refused, declaring that nothing would induce him again to subscribe the Articles. She secured the promotion of Sherlock, contrary to the wish of Walpole. She favoured the promotion of Hoadly and of Secker, and she endeavoured to draw the saintly Wilson from his obscure diocese in the Isle of Man to a more prominent and lucrative position, but he answered that 'he would not in his old age desert his wife because she was poor.' On the death of the Queen, however, Church patronage, like all other patronage, degenerated into a mere matter of party or personal interest. It was distributed for the most part among the members or adherents of the great families, subject to the conditions that the candidates were moderate in their views and were not inclined to any description of reform.[1]

It is not surprising that under such circumstances the spirit of the nation should have sunk very low. In the period between the Reformation and the Revolution England had been convulsed by some of the strongest passions of which large bodies of men are susceptible. The religious enthusiasm that accompanies great changes and conflicts of dogmatic belief, the enthusiasm of patriotism elicited by a deadly contest with a foreign enemy, the enthusiasm of liberty struggling with despotism, and the enthusiasm of loyalty struggling with innovation, had been the animating principles of large bodies of Englishmen. Different as are these enthusiasms in their nature and their objects, various as are the minds on which they operate, and great as are in some cases the evils that accompany their

[1] 'I would no more employ a man to govern and influence the clergy,' said Sir R. Walpole, 'who did not flatter the parsons, or who either talked, wrote, or acted against their authority, their profits, or their privileges, than I would try to govern the soldiery by setting a general over them who was always haranguing against the inconveniences of a standing army, or make a man Chancellor who was constantly complaining of the grievances of the Bar and threatening to rectify the abuses of Westminster Hall.'—Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. pp. 453–454.

excess, they have all the common property of kindling in large bodies of men an heroic self-sacrifice, of teaching them to subordinate material to moral ends, and of thus raising the tone of political life. All these enthusiasms had now gradually subsided, while the philanthropic and reforming spirit, which in the nineteenth century has in a great degree taken their place, was almost absolutely unfelt. With a Church teaching a cold and colourless morality and habitually discouraging every exhibition of zeal, with a dynasty accepted as necessary to the country, but essentially foreign in its origin, its character, and its sympathies, with a Government mild and tolerant, indeed, but selfish, corrupt, and hostile to reform, the nation gradually sank into a condition of selfish apathy. In very few periods was there so little religious zeal, or active loyalty, or public spirit. A kindred tone pervaded the higher branches of intellect. The philosophy of Locke, deriving our ideas mainly if not exclusively from external sources, was supreme among the stronger minds. In literature, in art, in speculation the imagination was repressed; strong passions, elevated motives, and sublime aspirations were replaced by critical accuracy of thought and observation, by a measured and fastidious beauty of form, by clearness, symmetry, sobriety, and good sense. We find this alike in the prose of Addison, in the poetry of Pope, and in the philosophy of Hume. The greatest wit and the most original genius of the age was also the most intensely and the most coarsely realistic. The greatest English painter of the time devoted himself mainly to caricature. The architects could see nothing but barbarous deformity in the Gothic cathedral, and their own works had touched the very nadir of taste. The long war of the Spanish Succession failed signally to arouse the energies of the nation. It involved no great principle that could touch the deeper chords of national feeling. It was carried on chiefly by means of subsidies. It was one of the most ill directed, ill executed, and unsuccessful that England had ever waged, and the people, who saw Hanoverian influence in every campaign, looked with an ominous supineness upon its vicissitudes. Good judges spoke with great despondency of the decline of public spirit as if the energy of the people had been fatally impaired. Their attitude during

the rebellion of 1745 was justly regarded as extremely alarming. It appeared as if all interest in those great questions which had convulsed England in the time of the Commonwealth and of the Revolution, had died away—as if even the old courage of the nation was extinct. Nothing can be more significant than the language of contemporary statesmen on the subject. 'I apprehend,' wrote old Horace Walpole when the news of the arrival of the Pretender was issued, 'that the people may perhaps look on and cry "Fight dog! fight bear!" if they do, no worse.' 'England,' wrote Henry Fox, 'Wade says, and I believe, is for the first comer, and if you can tell whether the 6,000 Dutch and ten battalions of English, or 5,000 French and Spaniards will be here first, you know our fate.' 'The French are not come—God be thanked! But had 5,000 landed in any part of this island a week ago, I verily believe the entire conquest of it would not have cost them a battle.' Alderman Heathcote, writing to the Earl of Marchmont in September 1745, and describing the condition of the country, no doubt indicated very truly the causes of the decline. 'Your Lordship will do me the justice,' he writes, 'to believe that it is with the utmost concern I have observed a remarkable change in the dispositions of the people within these two years; for numbers of them, who, during the apprehensions of the last invasion, appeared most zealous for the Government, are now grown absolutely cold and indifferent, so that except in the persons in the pay of the Government and a few Dissenters, there is not the least appearance of apprehension or concern to be met with. As an evidence of this truth, your Lordship may observe the little influence an actual insurrection has had on the public funds; and unless some speedy stop be put to this universal coldness by satisfying the demands of the nation and suppressing by proper laws that parliamentary prostitution which has destroyed our armies, our fleets, and our constitution, I greatly fear the event.'[2] The Government looked upon the attitude of the people simply as furnishing an argument for increasing the standing army, but the fact itself they admitted as freely as their opponents. 'When the late rebellion broke out,' says Lord Hardwicke in 1749, 'I believe most men were convinced that if

[1] Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 236–238. Walpole's *Letters*, ii. 65 (note).

[2] *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 342–343.

the rebels had succeeded, Popery as well as slavery would have been the certain consequence, and yet what a faint resistance did the people make in any part of the kingdom!—so faint that had we not been so lucky as to procure a number of regular troops from abroad time enough to oppose their approach, they might have got possession of our capital without any opposition except from the few soldiers we had in London.'[1]

These statements are very remarkable, and they are especially so because the apathy that was shown was not due to any sympathy with the Pretender. The disgraceful terror which seized London when the news of the Jacobite march upon Derby arrived was a sufficient evidence of the fact. 'In every place we passed through,' wrote the Jacobite historian of the rebellion, 'we found the English very ill-disposed towards us, except at Manchester. . . . The English peasants were hostile towards us in the highest degree.'[2] When a prisoner who was for a time believed to be the Young Pretender was brought to London, it was with the utmost difficulty that his escort could conduct him to the Tower through a savage mob, who desired to tear him limb from limb.[3] Even in Manchester, the day of thanksgiving for the suppression of the rebellion was celebrated by the populace, who insulted the nearest relatives of those who had perished on the gallows, and compelled them to subscribe to the illuminations. In Liverpool a Roman Catholic chapel was burnt, and all who were supposed to be guilty of Jacobite tendencies were in serious danger.[4] Nor did the executions which followed the suppression of the movement excite any general compassion. 'Popularity,' wrote Horace Walpole at this time, 'has changed sides since the year '15, for now the city and the generality are very angry that so many rebels have been pardoned.'[5]

The impression which this indifference to public interests produced in the minds of many observers was well expressed in a work which appeared in 1757 and 1758. Browne's 'Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times' is now hardly remembered except by brief and disparaging notices in one of

[1] Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 256-257.

[2] Johnstone's *Memoirs of the Rebellion*, pp. 70, 81.

[3] Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, Dec. 9, 1745.

[4] Picton's *Memorials of Liverpool*, i.

[5] Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, August 12, 1746.

the later writings of Burke and in one of the 'Essays' of Macaulay; but it had once a wide popularity and a considerable influence on public opinion. Its author was a clergyman well known in the history of ethics by his answer to Shaftesbury, which contains one of the ablest defences in English literature of the utilitarian theory of morals. His object was to warn the country of the utter ruin that must ensue from a decadence of the national spirit, which he maintained was only too manifest, and which he attributed mainly to an excessive development of the commercial spirit. He fully admits that constitutional liberty had been considerably enlarged, that a spirit of growing humanity was exhibited both in manners and in laws; that the administration of justice was generally pure, and that the age was not characterised by gross or profligate vice. Its leading quality was 'a vain, luxurious, and selfish effeminacy,' which was rapidly corroding all the elements of the national strength. 'Love of our country,' he complained, 'is no longer felt, and except in a few minds of uncommon greatness, the principle of public spirit exists not.' He appealed to the disuse of manly occupations among the higher classes, to their general indifference to religious doctrines and neglect of religious practices, to the ever-widening circle of corruption which had now passed from the Parliament to the constituencies, and tainted all the approaches of public life; to the prevailing system of filling the most important offices in the most critical times by family interest, and without any regard to merit or to knowledge. The extent of this evil, he maintained, was but too plainly shown in the contrast between the splendid victories of Marlborough and the almost uniform failure of the British arms in the late war, in the want of fire, energy, and heroism manifested in all public affairs, and, above all, in the conduct of the nation during the rebellion, 'when those of every rank above a constable, instead of arming themselves and encouraging the people, generally fled before the rebels; while a mob of ragged Highlanders marched unmolested to the heart of a populous kingdom.' He argued with much acuteness that the essential qualities of national greatness are moral, and that no increase of material resources could compensate for the deterioration which had in this respect passed over the English people.

It is, perhaps, difficult for us, who judge these predictions in the light which is furnished by the Methodist revival, and by the splendours of the administration of Chatham, to do full justice to their author. He appears to have been constitutionally a very desponding man, and he ended his life by suicide. The shadows of his picture are undoubtedly overcharged, and the marked revival of public spirit in the succeeding reign, when commerce was far more extended than under George II., proves conclusively that he had formed a very erroneous estimate of the influence of the commercial spirit. Yet it is certain that the disease, though it might still be arrested, was a real one, and its causes, as we have seen, are not difficult to trace. There was, undoubtedly, less of gross and open profligacy than in the evil days of the Restoration, and less of deliberate and organised treachery among statesmen than in the years that immediately followed the Revolution. The fault of the time was not so much the amount of vice as the defect of virtue, the general depression of motives, the unusual absence of unselfish and disinterested action. At the same time, though there had been a certain suspension of the moral influences that had formerly acted upon English society, the conditions of that society were at bottom sound, and contrasted in most respects favourably with those of the greatest nations on the Continent. In the middle of the eighteenth century the peasants of Germany were uniformly serfs, and the peasantry of France, though freed from the most oppressive, were still subject to some of the most irritating of feudal burdens, while in both countries political liberty was unknown, and in France, at least, religious and intellectual freedom were perpetually violated. In France, too, that fatal division of classes which has been the parent of most subsequent disasters, was already accomplished. The selfish infatuation of the Court which desired to attract to itself all that was splendid in the community, the growing centralisation of government, the want in the upper classes of all taste for country sports and duties, and the increasing attraction of town life, had led the richer classes almost invariably to abandon their estates for the pleasures of the capital, where, in the absence of healthy political life, they lost all sympathy with their fellow-countrymen, and speedily degenerated into hypo-

crites or profligates. Their tenants, on the other hand, deprived of the softening influence of contact with their superiors, reduced to penury by grinding and unequal taxation, and finding in the village priest their only type of civilisation, sank into that precise condition which transforms some men into the most implacable revolutionists, and others into the most superstitious of bigots. But in England nothing of this kind took place. The mixture of classes, on which English liberty and the perfection of the English type so largely depends, still continued. The country gentlemen were actively employed upon their estates, administering a rude justice, coming into constant and intimate connection with their tenants, and acquiring in the duties, associations, and even sports of a country life, elements of a practical political knowledge more valuable than any that can be acquired in books. Habits of hard and honest industry, a respect for domestic life, unflinching personal courage, were still general through the middle classes and among the poor, and if the last was suspected during the rebellion, it was at least abundantly displayed by the British infantry at Dettingen and Fontenoy. While all these subsisted, there remained elements of greatness which might easily, under favourable circumstances, be fanned into a flame.

It must be added, too, that the qualities most needed for the success of constitutional government, are not the highest, but what may be called the middle virtues of character and intellect. Heroic self-sacrifice, brilliant genius, a lofty level of generosity, intelligence, or morality, a clear perception of the connection and logical tendency of principles, have all, no doubt, their places under this as under other forms of government; but it is upon the wide diffusion of quite a different category of qualities or attainments that the permanence of constitutional government mainly depends. Patience, moderation, persevering energy, the spirit of compromise, a tolerance of difference of opinions, a general interest in public affairs, sound sense, love of order, a disposition to judge measures by actual working and not by any ideal theory, a love of practical improvement, and a great distrust of speculative politics, a dislike to change as change, combined with a readiness to recognise necessities when they arise, are the qualities which must be generally diffused through a

community before free institutions can take firm root among them. Judged by these tests the period we are considering exhibited, no doubt, in several respects a great decadence and deficiency, but not so great as if we measured it by a more ideal standard, and it may be safely asserted that in no other great nation were these qualities at this time so commonly exhibited.

A very similar judgment may be passed upon the system of government. It was corrupt, inefficient, and unheroic, but it was free from the gross vices of Continental administrations; it was moderate, tolerant, and economical; it was, with all its faults, a free government, and it contained in itself the elements of reformation.

I have examined in a former chapter the theory according to which the rival English parties have exchanged their principles since the early years of the eighteenth century, and I have endeavoured to show that it is substantially erroneous, that the historic identity of each party may be clearly established, whether we consider the classes of interests it represented, or the leading principles of its policy. We are now, however, in a position to see more clearly the facts which have given that theory its plausibility. The ministries of Walpole and Pelham represented especially the commercial classes and the Dissenters, aimed beyond all things at the maintenance of the type of monarchy established by the Revolution, and leaned almost uniformly towards those principles of religious liberty which the Tory party detested; but undisputed power had made them corrupt, selfish, and apathetic, and they sought, both in their own interest and in that of the dynasty, to check every reform that could either abridge their power or arouse strong passions in the nation. They also made it a great end of their policy to humour and conciliate to the utmost the country gentry, who were the natural opponents of their party. Though not Tory, they were in the true sense of the word Conservative, Governments; that is to say, Governments of which the supreme object and preoccupation was not the realisation of any unattained political ideal, or the redressing of any political grievances, but merely the maintenance of existing institutions against all assailants. The lines of party division were blurred and confused, and while only those who called themselves Whigs

were in general admitted to power, many were ranked in that category who, in a time of keener party struggles, would have been enrolled among the Tories. The characteristics of the two great parties have varied much with different circumstances. The idiosyncrasies of leaders whose attachment to their respective parties was often in the first instance due to the mere accident of birth or of position, the calm or louring aspect of foreign affairs, the dominant passion of the nation, the question whether a party is in office or in opposition, whether if in power its position is precarious or secure, and if in opposition it is likely soon to incur the responsibilities of office, have all their great influence on party politics. Still there is a real natural history of parties, and the division corresponds roughly to certain broad distinctions of mind and character that never can be effaced. The distinctions between content and hope, between caution and confidence, between the imagination that throws a halo of reverent association around the past and that which opens out brilliant vistas of improvement in the future, between the mind that perceives most clearly the advantages of existing institutions and the possible dangers of change and that which sees most keenly the defects of existing institutions and the vast additions that may be made to human well-being, form in all large classes of men opposite biases which find their expression in party divisions. The one side rests chiefly on the great truth that one of the first conditions of good government is essential stability, and on the extreme danger of a nation cutting itself off from the traditions of its past, denuding its government of all moral support, and perpetually tampering with the main pillars of the State. The other side rests chiefly upon the no less certain truths that Government is an organic thing, that it must be capable of growing, expanding, and adapting itself to new conditions of thought or of society; that it is subject to grave diseases, which can only be arrested by a constant vigilance, and that its attributes and functions are susceptible of almost infinite variety and extension with the new and various developments of national life. The one side represents the statical, the other the dynamical element in politics. Each can claim for itself a natural affinity to some of the highest qualities of mind and character, and each, perhaps,

owes quite as much of its strength to mental and moral disease. Stupidity is naturally Tory. The large classes who are blindly wedded to routine, and are simply incapable of understanding or appreciating new ideas, or the exigencies of changed circumstances, or the conditions of a reformed society, find their natural place in the Tory ranks. Folly, on the other hand, is naturally liberal. To this side belongs the cast of mind which, having no sense of the infinite complexity and interdependence of political problems, of the part which habit, association, and tradition play in every healthy political organism, and of the multifarious remote and indirect consequences of every institution, is prepared with a light heart and a reckless hand to recast the whole framework of the constitution in the interest of speculation or experiment. The colossal weight of national selfishness gravitates naturally to Toryism. That party rallies round its banner the great multitude who, having made their position, desire merely to keep things as they are, who are prepared to subordinate their whole policy to the maintenance of class privileges, who look with cold hearts and apathetic minds on the vast mass of remediable misery and injustice around them, who have never made a serious effort, or perhaps conceived a serious desire, to leave the world in any respect a better place than they found it. Even in the case of reforms which have no natural connection with party politics, and which, by diverting attention from other changes, would be eminently beneficial to the Tories, that party is usually less efficient than its rival, because its leaders are paralysed by the atmosphere of selfishness pervading their ranks, and because most of the reforming and energetic intellects are ranged among their opponents. On the other hand, the acrid humours and more turbulent passions of society flow strongly in the liberal direction. Envy, which hates every privilege or dignity it does not share, is intensely democratic, and disordered ambitions and dishonest adventurers find their natural place in the party of progress and of change.

The Whig Governments, from the accession of George I. to the death of Henry Pelham, only exhibited in a very subdued and diluted form both the virtues and the vices of liberalism; and though this period is very important in the history of

English politics, its importance lies much more in the silent and almost insensible growth of Parliamentary government than in distinct remedial measures. The measures of reform that were actually passed were usually such as were almost imperatively demanded by critical circumstances, or by the growth of some great evil in the nation. Some of them were of great importance. The rebellion of 1745 made it absolutely necessary to put an end to the anarchy of the Highlands, and to the almost complete independence which enabled the Highland chief to defy the law, and to rally around him in a few days, and in any cause, a considerable body of armed men. The Acts for the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions, for disarming the Highlanders, and for depriving them of their national dress, were carried with this object, and the first, which made the English law supreme throughout the island, has, as we shall see in another chapter, proved one of the most important measures in Scotch history, the chief cause of the rapid progress of Scotland in wealth and civilisation.

Another measure of the Pelham ministry was intended to check a still graver evil than Highland anarchy. The habit of gin-drinking—the master curse of English life, to which most of the crime and an immense proportion of the misery of the nation may be ascribed—if it did not absolutely originate, at least became for the first time a national vice, in the early Hanoverian period. Drunkenness, it is true, had long been common, though Camden maintained that in his day it was still a recent vice, that there had been a time when the English were 'of all the Northern nations the most commended for their sobriety,' and that 'they first learnt in their wars in the Netherlands to drown themselves with immoderate drinking.'[1] The Dutch and German origin of many drinking terms lends some colour to this assertion, and it is corroborated by other evidence. Superfluity of drink,' wrote Tom Nash in the reign of Elizabeth, 'is a sin that ever since we have mixed ourselves with the Low Countries is counted honourable; but, before we knew their lingering wars, was held in the highest degree of hatred that might be.' 'As the English,' said Chamberlayne, 'returning from the wars in the Holy Land brought home the foul disease of leprosy. . . . so in our fathers' days the English

[1] Camden's *Hist. of Elizabeth*, A.D. 1581.

returning from the service in the Netherlands brought with them the foul vice of drunkenness.' But the evil, if it was not indigenous in England,[1] at least spread very rapidly and very widely. 'In England,' said Iago, 'they are most potent in potting. Your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander are nothing to your English.'[2] 'We seem,' wrote a somewhat rhetorical writer in 1657, 'to be steeped in liquors, or to be the dizzy island. We drink as if we were nothing but sponges . . . or had tunnels in our mouths. . . . We are the grape-suckers of the earth.'[3] The dissipated habits of the Restoration, and especially the growing custom of drinking toasts, greatly increased the evil, but it was noticed that the introduction of coffee, which spread widely through England in the last years of the seventeenth century, had a perceptible influence in diminishing it,[4] and among the upper classes drunkenness was, perhaps, never quite so general as between the time of Elizabeth and the Revolution. French wines were the favourite drink, but the war of the Revolution for a time almost excluded them, and the Methuen Treaty of 1703, which admitted the wines of Portugal at a duty of one-third less than those of France, gradually produced a complete change in the national taste. This change was, however, not fully accomplished for nearly a century, and it was remarked that in the reign of Anne the desire to obtain French wines at a reasonable rate greatly strengthened the opposition to Marlborough and the war.[5] The amount of hard drinking among the upper classes was still very great, and it is remarkable how many of the most conspicuous characters were addicted to it. Addison, the foremost moralist of his time, was not free from it.[6] Oxford, whose private character was in most respects singularly high, is said to have come, not unfrequently, drunk into the very presence of the Queen.[7] Bolingbroke, when in office, sat up whole nights

[1] See the early history of English drinking, in Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature; Drinking Customs in England*; and Malcolm's *Manners and Customs of London*, i. pp. 285–289.

[2] *Othello*, act ii. scene 3.

[3] Reeve's 'Plea for Nineveh,' quoted in Malcolm's *Manners and Customs of London*, i. p. 286.

[4] Chamberlayne. See, too, a curious testimony on this subject quoted in Jesse's *London*, iii. 250.

[5] Cunningham's *Hist.*, ii. pp. 200–201. Dr. Radcliffe is said to have ascribed much of the sickness of the time to the want of French wines. See, too, on the history of French wines, Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 165, 166, 180, 181. Davenant's *Report to the Commissioners for Stating the Public Accounts*.

[6] Spence. Swift's *Correspondence*.

[7] E. Lewis to Swift.

drinking, and in the morning, having bound a wet napkin round his forehead and his eyes, to drive away the effects of his intemperance, he hastened, without sleep, to his official business.[1] When Walpole was a young man his father was accustomed to pour into his glass a double portion of wine, saying, 'Come, Robert, you shall drink twice while I drink once; for I will not permit the son in his sober senses to be witness of the intoxication of his father.' This education produced its natural fruits, and the entertainments of the minister at Houghton were the scandal of his county, and often drove Lord Townshend from his neighbouring seat of Rainham.[2] The brilliant intellect of Carteret was clouded by drink,[3] and even Pulteney, who appears in his later years to have had stronger religious convictions than any other politician of his time, is said to have shortened his life by the same means.[4]

Among the poor, however, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the popular beverage was still beer or ale, the use of which—especially before the art of noxious adulteration was brought to its present perfection—has always been more common than the abuse. The consumption appears to have been amazing. It was computed in 1688 that no less than 12,400,000 barrels were brewed in England in a single year, though the entire population probably little exceeded 5,000,000. In 1695, with a somewhat heavier excise it sank to 11,350,000 barrels, but even then almost a third part of the arable land of the kingdom was devoted to barley.[5] Under Charles I. a company was formed with the sole right of making spirits and vinegar in the cities of London and Westminster and within twenty-one miles of the same, but this measure had little fruit; the British distilleries up to the time of the Revolution were quite inconsiderable and the brandies which were imported in large quantities from France, were much too expensive to become

[1] Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, vi. 168.

[2] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 5, 758, 759.

[3] Chesterfield's *Characters*.

[4] 'Speaker Onslow's Remarks (Coxe's *Walpole*, vol. ii. p. 559).

[5] Gregory King's *State of England*, pp. 55-56. In an edition of Chamberlayne's *Magnæ Britanniæ Notitia*, published in 1710, it is stated that in 1667, when the greater part of London was in ashes after the fire, and many of the inhabitants were forced to retire to the country, no less than 1,522,781 barrels of beer and ale were brewed in the city, each of them containing from 32 to 36 gallons, that the amount brewed annually in London had since risen to near two million of barrels, and that the excise for London was farmed out for 120,000*l.* a year (p. 219).

popular. Partly, however, through hostility to France, and partly in order to encourage the home distilleries, the Government of the Revolution, in 1689, absolutely prohibited the importation of spirits from all foreign countries,[1] and threw open the trade of distillery, on the payment of certain duties, to all its subjects.[2] These measures laid the foundation of the great extension of the English manufacture of spirits, but it was not till about 1724 that the passion for gin-drinking appears to have infected the masses of the population, and it spread with the rapidity and the violence of an epidemic. Small as is the place which this fact occupies in English history, it was probably, if we consider all the consequences that have flowed from it, the most momentous in that of the eighteenth century—incomparably more so than any event in the purely political or military annals of the country. The fatal passion for drink was at once, and irrevocably, planted in the nation. The average of British spirits distilled, which is said to have been only 527,000 gallons in 1684, and 2,000,000 in 1714, had risen in 1727 to 3,601,000, and in 1735 to 5,394,000 gallons. Physicians declared that in excessive gin-drinking a new and terrible source of mortality had been opened for the poor. The grand jury of Middlesex, in a powerful presentment declared that much the greater part of the poverty, the murders, the robberies of London, might be traced to this single cause. Retailers of gin were accustomed to hang out painted boards announcing that their customers could be made drunk for a penny, and dead drunk for twopence, and should have straw for nothing; and cellars strewn with straw were accordingly provided, into which those who had become insensible were dragged, and where they remained till they had sufficiently recovered to renew their orgies. The evil acquired such frightful dimensions that even the unreforming Parliament of Walpole perceived the necessity of taking strong measures to arrest it, and in 1736 Sir J. Jekyll brought in and carried a measure, to which Walpole reluctantly assented, imposing a duty of 20*s.* a gallon on all spirituous liquors, and prohibiting any person from selling them in less quantities than

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, xii. 1212.
[2] Ibid., xii. 1211–1214. Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 639.

two gallons without paying a tax of 50*l.* a year.[1] Such a scale, if it could have been maintained, would have almost amounted to prohibition, but the passion for these liquors was now too widely spread to be arrested by law. Violent riots ensued. In 1737, it is true, the consumption sank to about 3,600,000 gallons, but, as Walpole had predicted, a clandestine retail trade soon sprang up, which being at once very lucrative and very popular, increased to such an extent that it was found impossible to restrain it. In 1742, more than 7,000,000 gallons were distilled, and the consumption was steadily augmenting. The measure of 1736 being plainly inoperative, an attempt was made in 1743 to suppress the clandestine trade, and at the same time to increase the public revenue by a Bill lowering the duty on most kinds of spirits to 1*d.* in the gallon, levied at the still-head, and at the same time reducing the price of retail licences from 50*l.* to 20*s.*[2] The Bill was carried in spite of the strenuous opposition of Chesterfield, Lord Hervey, and the whole bench of Bishops; and, while it did nothing to discourage drunkenness, it appears to have had little or no effect upon smuggling. In 1749 more than 4,000 persons were convicted of selling spirituous liquors without a licence, and the number of the private gin-shops, within the Bills of Mortality, was estimated at more than 17,000. At the same time crime and immorality of every description were rapidly increasing. The City of London urgently petitioned for new measures of restriction. The London physicians stated in 1750 that there were, in or about the metropolis, no less than 14,000 cases of illness, most of them beyond the reach of medicine, directly attributable to gin. Fielding, in his well-known pamphlet 'On the late Increase of Robbers,' which was published in 1751, ascribed that evil, in a great degree 'to a new kind of drunkenness, unknown to our ancestors;' he declared that gin was 'the principal sustenance (if it may so be called) of more than 100,000 people in the metropolis,' and he predicted that, 'should the drinking of this poison be continued at its present height during the next twenty years, there will, by that time, be very few of the common people left to drink it.' It was computed that, in 1750 and 1751, more than 11 millions of gallons of spirits were

[1] 9 Geo. II. c. 23. [2] 16 Geo. II. c. 8.

annually consumed, and the increase of population, especially in London, appears to have been perceptibly checked. Bishop Benson, in a letter written from London a little later, said 'there is not only no safety of living in this town, but scarcely any in the country now, robbery and murther are grown so frequent. Our people are now become what they never before were, cruel and inhuman. Those accursed spirituous liquors, which, to the shame of our Government, are so easily to be had, and in such quantities drunk, have changed the very nature of our people; and they will, if continued to be drunk, destroy the very race of people themselves.'[1]

In 1751, however, some new and stringent measures were carried under the Pelham ministry, which had a real and very considerable effect. Distillers were prohibited under a penalty of 10*l.* from either retailing spirituous liquors themselves, or selling them to unlicensed retailers. Debts contracted for liquors not amounting to twenty shillings at a time were made irrecoverable by law. Retail licences were conceded only to 10*l.* householders within the Bills of Mortality, and to traders who were subject to certain parochial rates without them, and the penalties for unlicensed retailing were greatly increased. For the second offence the clandestine dealer was liable to three months' imprisonment and to whipping; for the third offence he incurred the penalty of transportation.[2] Two years later another useful law was carried restricting the liberty of magistrates in issuing licences, and subjecting publichouses to severe regulations.[3] Though much less ambitious than the Act of 1736 these measures were far more efficacious, and they form a striking instance of the manner in which legislation, if not over-strained or ill-timed, can improve the morals of a people. Among other consequences of the Acts it may be observed that dropsy, which had risen in London to a wholly unprecedented point between 1718 and 1751, immediately diminished, and the diminution was ascribed by physicians to the marked decrease of drunkenness in the community.[4] Still these measures formed a palliation and not a cure, and from the early years of the eighteenth century gin-

[1] Fraser's *Life of Berkeley*, pp. 332-333.
[2] 24 Geo. II. c. 40.
[3] 26 Geo. II. c. 13.
[4] Heberden, *Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Different Diseases* (1801) p. 45.

drinking has never ceased to be the main counteracting influence to the moral, intellectual, and physical benefits that might be expected from increased commercial prosperity. Of all the pictures of Hogarth none are more impressive than those in which he represents the different conditions of a people whose national beverage is beer and of a people who are addicted to gin, and the contrast exhibits in its most unfavourable aspect the difference between the Hanoverian period and that which preceded it.[1]

Something also was done to secure the maintenance of order, but there was still very much to be desired. The impunity with which outrages were committed in the ill-lit and ill-guarded streets of London during the first half of the eighteenth century can now hardly be realised. In 1712 a club of young men of the higher classes, who assumed the name of Mohocks, were accustomed nightly to sally out drunk into the streets to hunt the passers-by and to subject them in mere wantonness to the most atrocious outrages. One of their favourite amusements, called 'tipping the lion,' was to squeeze the nose of their victim flat upon his face and to bore out his eyes with their fingers. Among them were the 'sweaters,' who formed a circle round their prisoner and pricked him with their swords till he sank exhausted to the ground, the 'dancing masters,' so called from their skill in making men caper by thrusting swords into their legs, the 'tumblers,' whose favourite amusement was to set women on their heads and commit various indecencies and barbarities on the limbs that were exposed. Maid servants as they opened their masters' doors were waylaid, beaten, and their faces cut. Matrons inclosed in barrels were rolled down the steep and stony incline of Snow Hill. Watchmen were unmercifully beaten and their noses slit. Country gentlemen went to the theatre as if in time of war, accompanied by their armed retainers. A bishop's son was said to be one of the gang, and a baronet was among those who were arrested.[2] This atrocious

[1] See on this subject the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1751, pp. 136, 282-283, 321, 322; 1760, pp. 18-22. Short's *Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind in England*, p. 21. Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 182. Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, p. 209. Walpole's *George II.* i. 66-67. Smollett's *Hist.* Fielding's *Increase of Robbers. Parl. Debates.*

[2] Swift's *Journal to Stella.* Gay's *Trivia. The Spectator*, 324, 335, 347.

fashion passed away, but other, though comparatively harmless, rioters were long accustomed to beat the watch, to break the citizens' windows, and to insult the passers-by, while robberies multiplied to a fearful extent. Long after the Revolution, the policy of the Government was to rely mainly upon informers for the repression of crime, but the large rewards that were offered were in a great degree neutralised by the popular feeling against the class. The watchmen or constables were as a rule utterly inefficient, were to be found much more frequently in beer-shops than in the streets, and were often themselves a serious danger to the community. Fielding, who knew them well, has left a graphic description of one class. 'They were chosen out of those poor decrepit people who are, from their want of bodily strength, rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. These men, armed only with a pole, which some of them are scarcely able to lift, are to secure the persons and houses of his Majesty's subjects from the attacks of gangs of young, bold, desperate, and well-armed villains. If the poor old fellows should run away, no one, I think, can wonder, unless it be that they were able to make their escape.'[1] Of others an opinion may be formed from an incident related by Horace Walpole in 1742. 'A parcel of drunken constables took it into their heads to put the laws in execution against disorderly persons, and so took up every woman they met, till they had collected five or six and twenty, all of whom they thrust into St. Martin's roundhouse, where they kept them all night, with doors and windows closed. The poor creatures, who could not stir or breathe, screamed as long as they had any breath left, begging at least for water . . but in vain. . . In the morning four were found stifled to death, two died soon after, and a dozen more are in a shocking way. . . . Several of them were beggars, who from having no lodging were necessarily found in the street, and others honest, labouring women. One of the dead was a poor washerwoman, big with child, who was retiring home late from washing. One of the constables is taken, and others absconded; but I question if any of them will suffer death, though the greatest criminals in this town are the officers of justice; there is no tyranny they do not exercise, no villany of

[1] *Amelia*, bk. i. ch. 2.

which they do not partake.'[1] The magistrates were in many cases not only notoriously ignorant and inefficient, but also what was termed 'trading justices,' men of whom Fielding said that 'they were never indifferent in a cause but when they could get nothing on either side.'[2] The daring and the number of robbers increased till London hardly resembled a civilised town. 'Thieves and robbers,' said Smollett, speaking of 1730, 'were now become more desperate and savage than they had ever appeared since mankind were civilised.'[3] The Mayor and aldermen of London in 1744 drew up an address to the King, in which they stated that 'diver confederacies of great numbers of evil-disposed persons, armed with bludgeons, pistols, cutlasses, and other dangerous weapons, infest not only the private lanes and passages, but likewise the public streets and places of usual concourse, and commit most daring outrages upon the persons of your Majesty's good subjects whose affairs oblige them to pass through the streets, by robbing and wounding them, and these acts are frequently perpetrated at such times as were heretofore deemed hours of security.'[4] The same complaints were echoed in the same year in the 'Proposals of the Justices of the Peace for Suppressing Street Robberies,' and the magistrates who drew them up specially noticed, and ascribed to the use of spirituous liquors 'the cruelties which are now exercised on the persons robbed, which before the excessive use of these liquors were unknown in this nation.'[5] They recommended an extension of the system of rewards, the suppression or restriction of gaming-houses, public gardens, fairs, and gin-shops, and also measures for systematically drafting into the army and navy suspected and dangerous persons against whom no positive crime could be proved.

The evil, however, appears to have continued. 'One is forced to travel,' wrote Horace Walpole in 1751, 'even at noon as if one were going to battle.'[6] The punishments were atrocious and atrociously executed, but they fell chiefly on the more

[1] To Sir H. Mann, July, 1742.

[2] See his picture of Justice Thrasher, in *Amelia*, and his sketch of Justice Squeezum, in *The Coffee-house Politician*. See, too, Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 236–239, and Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, i. 390–391.

[3] *Hist. of England.*

[4] Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 230.

[5] Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, ii. 97–99.

[6] To Sir H. Mann. March 23, 1752.

insignificant and inexperienced offenders. On a single morning no less than seventeen persons were executed in London.[1] One gang of robbers in 1753 kept the whole city in alarm from the number and skill of their robberies and the savage wounds they inflicted on their victims. A recompense of 100*l.* was offered for the apprehension of each of them, but its chief effect was to encourage men who deliberately decoyed poor and unwary wretches into robbery in order that by informing against them they might obtain the reward.[2] The more experienced robbers for a time completely overawed the authorities. 'Officers of justice,' wrote Fielding, 'have owned to me that they have passed by such, with warrants in their pockets against them without daring to apprehend them; and, indeed, they could not be blamed for not exposing themselves to sure destruction; for it is a melancholy truth that at this very day a rogue no sooner gives the alarm within certain purlieus than twenty or thirty armed villains are found ready to come to his assistance.'[3] When the eighteenth century had far advanced, robbers for whose apprehension large rewards were offered, have been known to ride publicly and unmolested, before dusk, in the streets of London, surrounded by their armed adherents, through the midst of a half-terrified, half-curious crowd.[4]

This state of things was very alarming, and the evil was apparently growing, though some real measures had been taken to improve the security of London. One very important step in this direction was accomplished under George I. The districts of Whitefriars and the Savoy had for centuries the privilege of sheltering debtors against their creditors, and they had become the citadels of the worst characters in the community, who defied the officers of justice and were a perpetual danger to the surrounding districts. In 1697 a law had been passed annulling their franchises; but similar privileges, though not legally recognised, were claimed for the Mint in Southwark, and for many years were successfully maintained. Multitudes of debtors, and with them great numbers of more serious crimi-

[1] To Sir H. Mann. March 23, 1752.

[2] Sir John Fielding's *Account of the origin and effects of a police set on foot in* 1753.

[3] *Causes of the Increase of Robbers.*

[4] See an extraordinary instance of this in Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 235.

nals, fled to this quarter. The attempts of the officers to arrest them were resisted by open violence. Every kind of crime was concocted with impunity and every conspirator knew where to look for daring and perfectly unscrupulous agents. It was not until 1723 that the Government ventured to grapple firmly with this great evil. An Act making it felony to obstruct the execution of a writ, and enabling the Sheriff of Surrey to raise a *posse comitatus* for taking by force debtors from the Mint finally removed this plague-spot from the metropolis, and put an end for ever in England to that right of sanctuary which had for many generations been one of the most serious obstructions to the empire of the law.[1]

Another and still more important step was the measure which was carried in 1736 for the proper lighting of the streets. Up to this date London was probably in this respect behind every other great city in Europe. The lighting was done by contract, and the contractors, by a singular arrangement, agreed to pay the City 600*l.* a-year for their monopoly. In return for this they were empowered to levy a rate of 6*s.* a-year from all housekeepers who paid poor rate, and from all who had houses of over 10*l.* per annum, unless they hung out a lantern or candle before their doors, in which case they were exempt from paying for the public lamps. The contractors were bound to place a light before every tenth house, but only from Michaelmas to Lady Day, and then only until midnight, and only on what were termed 'dark nights.' The 'light nights' were ten every month from the sixth after the new moon till the third after the full moon. The system was introduced at the end of the reign of Charles II., and was then a great improvement, but it left the streets of London absolutely unlighted for far more than half the hours of darkness. Under such conditions the suppression of crime was impossible, and few measures enacted during the eighteenth century contributed more to the safety of the metropolis than that which was passed in 1736 enabling the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to erect glass lamps in sufficient numbers throughout London, to keep them lighted from the setting to the rising of the sun, and to levy a considerable and general rate for their maintenance. More than

[1] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 127–128.

15,000 lamps are said in a few years to have been erected, and it was calculated that, while under the old system London was only lit by public lamps for about 750 hours in the year, under the new system it was lighted for about 5,000.[1]

Yet, in spite of this great change, street robberies continued for some years to increase, and the inefficiency of the watchmen, and the great multiplication of the criminal classes under the influence of gin, were constant subjects of complaint. The great novelist Fielding, when driven by narrowed circumstances to accept the office of Bow Street magistrate, did much both to call attention to and to remedy the evil. Under the direction of the Duke of Newcastle, he and his brother, who succeeded him in his post, instituted a new police, consisting of picked men who had been constables, and who were placed under the direct control of the Bow Street magistrates. A very remarkable success rewarded their labours. The gang which had so long terrified London was broken up; nearly all its members were executed, and the change effected was so great that Browne, writing in 1757, was able to say that 'the reigning evil of street robberies has been almost wholly suppressed.'[2] At the same time a serious attempt was made, at once to remove the seeds and sources of crime, and to provide a large reserve for the navy, by collecting many hundreds of the destitute boys who swarmed in the streets, clothing them by public subscription, and drafting them into ships of war, where they were educated as sailors.[3] The police-force soon became again very inefficient, but the condition of London does not appear to have been at any subsequent period as bad as in the first half of the eighteenth century, though the country highways were still infested with robbers. The early Hanoverian period has, indeed, probably contributed as much as any other portion of English history to the romance of crime. The famous burglar, John Sheppard, after two marvellous escapes from Newgate, which made him the idol of the populace, was at last hung in 1724. The famous thief-taker, Jonathan Wild, after a long career of crime, being at last convicted of returning stolen goods to the rightful owner without prosecuting the

[1] Maitland's *Hist. of London*, i. 565-567.

[2] Browne's *Estimate*, i. p. 219.

[3] Sir John Fielding *on the police of* 1753.

thieves, which had lately been made a capital offence,[1] was executed in the following year, and was soon after made the subject of a romance by Fielding. The famous highwayman, Dick Turpin, was executed in 1739. Another well-known highwayman named M'Lean is said to have been the son of an Irish Dean and brother of a Calvinist minister in great esteem at the Hague. He had a lodging in St. James's Street; his manners were those of a polished gentleman, and the interest he excited was so great that the day before his execution in 1750 no less than 3,000 persons visited his cell.[2] The weakness of the law was also shown in the great number of serious riots which took place in every part of the kingdom. The Porteous riots and the riots against the malt-tax in Scotland, the Spitalfields riots directed against Irish weavers, and the numerous riots occasioned by the Gin Act, and at a later period by the system of turnpikes and by the preaching of the Methodists, were the most remarkable, while the characteristic English hatred of foreigners was shown by a furious disturbance in 1738 because French actors were employed at the Haymarket, and some years afterwards by the sacking of Drury Lane theatre because Garrick had employed in a spectacle some French dancers. Outrages connected with smuggling were in many parts of the kingdom singularly daring and ferocious, and they were often countenanced by a large amount of popular sympathy.[3] In Hampshire a gang of deer-stealers, known as the Waltham Blacks, were in the reign of George I. so numerous and so audacious, that a special and most sanguinary law, known as the 'Black Act,' was found necessary for their suppression.[4]

Another crime, strikingly indicative of the imperfect civilisation of the country, was the plunder of shipwrecked sailors, who were often lured by false signals upon the rocks. In some of the Northern countries of Europe, till a comparatively recent period, the law expressly permitted the inhabitants to seize, as a prize, any property that was wrecked upon their coast.[5] In

[1] The goods were stolen, and as soon as a reward was offered restored by a confederate.

[2] Horace Walpole to Mann. Aug. 1750. Walpole had himself been robbed by M'Lean. Some curious particulars of the crime of this period will be found in Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*.

[3] See Pike's *Hist. of Crime*, ii. 399, 652.

[4] 9 George I. c. 22. See White's *Selborne*, p. 29, 30.

[5] Blackstone, bk. i. ch. viii. § 2.

England, without any such permission, it became a prevalent custom. At the close of the seventeenth century Defoe mentions that many Englishmen had been sacrificed abroad in resentment for these barbarities, and he tells us how, when a ship of which he was himself a shareholder was sinking on the coast of Biscay, a Spanish ship refused to give any assistance, the captain declaring, 'that, having been shipwrecked somewhere on the coast of England, the people, instead of saving him and his ship, came off and robbed him, tore the ship almost to pieces, and left him and his men to swim ashore for their lives while they plundered the cargo; upon which he and his whole crew had sworn never to help an Englishman in whatever distress he should find them, whether at sea or on shore.'[1] About the middle of the eighteenth century the crime increased to an enormous degree on many parts of the British coast.[2] In order to check it a law had been passed in the reign of Anne and made perpetual under George I., making it felony, without the benefit of clergy, to do any act by which a ship was destroyed, fining anyone who secreted shipwrecked goods treble their value, and enabling the authorities in every seaport town to take special measures for the relief of ships in distress, and in case of success to exact a certain sum from the owners as salvage.[3] It was ordered that this act should be read four times yearly in all the parish churches and chapels of all seaport towns in the kingdom.[4] It proved, however, utterly insufficient, and in the administration of Pelham the plunder of a shipwrecked or distressed vessel was made a capital offence.[5] Notwithstanding this enactment, however, the crime was by no means suppressed. It was the especial scandal of Cornwall. In visiting that county in 1776, Wesley learnt that it was still as common there as ever; he severely censured the connivance or indifference of the gentry, who might have totally suppressed it,[6] and he also found the custom very general on the western coast of Ireland.[7]

[1] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 209.
[2] Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 272.
[3] 12 Anne II. c. 18; 4 George I. c. 12.
[4] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. pp. 39–41.
[5] 26 George II. c. 19.
[6] Wesley's *Journal*, Aug. 1776.
[7] 'A Swedish ship being leaky put into one of our harbours. The Irish, according to custom, ran to plunder her. A neighbouring gentleman hindered them; and for so doing demanded a fourth part of the cargo. And this, they said, the law allows.' —Wesley's *Journal*, June 1760.

The long list of social reforms passed under the Pelham ministry may be fitly closed by the Marriage Act of Lord Hardwicke, which put a stop to those Fleet marriages which had become one of the strangest scandals of English life. Before this Act, the canon law was in force in England, and according to its provisions the mere consent of the parties, followed by cohabitation, constituted, for many purposes, a valid marriage; and a marriage valid for all purposes could be celebrated by a priest in orders at any time or place, without registration and without the consent of parents or guardians. Stamped licences were indeed required by law, but not for the validity of the contract, and their omission was only punished as a fraud upon the revenue. In such a state of the law atrocious abuses had grown up. A multitude of clergymen, usually prisoners for debt and almost always men of notoriously infamous lives, made it their business to celebrate clandestine marriages in or near the Fleet. They performed the ceremony without licence or question, sometimes without even knowing the names of the persons they united, in public-houses, brothels, or garrets. They acknowledged no ecclesiastical superior. Almost every tavern or brandy shop in the neighbourhood had a Fleet parson in its pay. Notices were placed in the windows, and agents went out in every direction to solicit the passers by. A more pretentious, and perhaps more popular establishment was the Chapel in Curzon-street, where the Rev. Alexander Keith officiated. He was said to have made a 'very bishopric of revenue' by clandestine marriages, and the expression can hardly be exaggerated if it be true, as was asserted in Parliament, that he had married on an average 6,000 couples every year. He himself stated that he had married many thousands, the great majority of whom had not known each other more than a week, and many only a day or half a day. Young and inexperienced heirs fresh from college, or even from school, were thus continually entrapped. A passing frolic, the excitement of drink, an almost momentary passion, the deception or intimidation of a few unprincipled confederates, were often sufficient to drive or inveigle them into sudden marriages, which blasted all the prospects of their lives. In some cases, when men slept off a drunken fit, they heard to their astonishment that, during its

continuance, they had gone through the ceremony. When a fleet came in and the sailors flocked on shore to spend their pay in drink and among prostitutes, they were speedily beleaguered, and 200 or 300 marriages constantly took place within a week. Among the more noted instances of clandestine marriages we find that of the Duke of Hamilton with Miss Gunning, that of the Duke of Kingston with Miss Chudleigh, that of Henry Fox with the daughter of the Duke of Richmond, that of the poet Churchill, who at the age of seventeen entered into a marriage which contributed largely to the unhappiness of his life. The state of the law seemed, indeed, ingeniously calculated to promote both the misery and the immorality of the people, for while there was every facility for contracting the most inconsiderate marriages, divorce, except by a special Act of Parliament, was absolutely unattainable. It is not surprising that contracts so lightly entered into should have been as lightly violated. Desertion, conjugal infidelity, bigamy, fictitious marriages celebrated by sham priests, were the natural and frequent consequences of the system. In many cases in the Fleet registers names were suppressed or falsified, and marriages fraudulently antedated, and many households, after years of peace, were convulsed by some alleged pre-contract or clandestine tie. It was proved before Parliament that on one occasion there had been 2,954 Fleet marriages in four months, and it appeared from the memorandum-books of Fleet parsons that one of them made 57*l.* in marriage fees in a single month, that another had married 173 couples in a single day.

The evil was of considerable standing, and some attempts had been made to remedy it. By a law of William III. any clergyman celebrating a marriage without licence was subject to a fine of 100*l.*,[1] but this penalty was not renewed at each violation of the Act, and the offender was able by a writ of error to obtain a delay of about a year and a half, during which time he carried on his profession without molestation, made at least 400*l.* or 500*l.*, and then frequently absconded. No penalty whatever attached to the public-house keeper, who hired the clergyman, and in whose house the ceremony was performed. Another Act, passed in 1712, after reciting the loss the revenue

[1] 6 & 7 William III. c. 6; 7 & 8 William III. c. xxxv.

experienced from these practices, raised the penalty incurred by the priest to imprisonment, but this also it was found possible to evade. To meet the evil it was necessary to re-model the whole marriage law. The first step in this direction was taken by Lord Bath, who, when attending a Scotch trial, was struck by the hardship of a case in which a man, after a marriage of thirty years, was claimed by another woman on the ground of a pre-contract; but the preparation of a measure on the subject soon passed into the hands of the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, who succeeded, in 1753, in carrying it successfully through Parliament. His Act provided that, with the exception of Jewish and Quaker marriages, no marriage should be valid in England which was not celebrated by a priest in orders, and according to the Anglican liturgy, that the ceremony could not be performed unless the banns had been published for three successive Sundays in the parish church, or unless a licence had been procured, and that these licences in the cases of minors should be conditional upon the consent of the parents or guardians. The special licence by which alone the marriage could be celebrated in any other place than the parish church, could only be issued by the Archbishop, and cost a considerable sum. All marriages which did not conform to these provisions were null, and all who celebrated them were liable to transportation.[1]

This measure is extremely important, as introducing into English legislation a principle which has even now by no means attained its full recognition, but which is evidently destined to become one day supreme. According to the theological theory which was adopted by the law of England, and was long absolute in Christendom, the Church alone has a right to determine what constitutes the validity of a marriage, and when that marriage is once consummated it is absolutely indissoluble, and possesses a mystical sanctity altogether irrespective of its influence upon society. In opposition to this view there has grown up in the last century a conviction that it is not the business of the State to enforce morals, and especially any particular theological conceptions of duty, that its sole end should be to increase the temporal happiness of the people, and that the re-

[1] 26 George II. c. 33.

strictions it imposes on individual liberty can only be justified, and should be strictly limited, by this end. According to this view the ecclesiastical and the legal conceptions of marriage are entirely distinct. Marriage should be regarded by the legislator merely as a civil contract of extreme importance to the maintenance of the young, the disposition of property, and the stability of society; and it is the right and the duty of the State, with a sole view to the interests of society, to determine on what conditions it may be celebrated, annulled, or repeated.

In some respects these two views coincide, while in others they conflict. Every statesman will admit that the purity and stability of the marriage state are social ends of great importance, and that a religious sanction contributes to secure them. At the same time the legislator will, in some respects, be more severe, and in others more indulgent than the divine. Considering marriage as a contract involving momentous civil consequences, he may insist that it should be entered into publicly, formally, and deliberately, may lay down in the interests of society certain restrictive conditions, and may absolutely refuse, when those conditions are not complied with, to recognise its existence, or to punish those who violate or repeat it. On the other hand, in all questions relating to marriages of consanguinity or to divorce, State interference with the liberty of individuals can only be justified on utilitarian grounds. If, for example, the question be that of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, a legislator imbued with this spirit will consider it wholly irrevelant to discuss whether such marriages were or were not forbidden in the Levitical code, whether the Levitical code is binding upon a Christian, whether ecclesiastical tradition favours or condemns them. The sole question for him to decide is whether they produce such a clear preponderance of social evils as would justify him in restricting in this respect the natural liberty of the subject. If they do not, they should be permitted, and those who regard them as theologically wrong should refrain from contracting them. A similar principle applies to the difficult question of divorce. At first sight nothing can appear more monstrous than that when two persons have voluntarily entered into a contract with the single purpose of promoting their mutual happiness, when

they find by experience that the effect of that contract is not happiness but misery, and when they are both of them anxious to dissolve it, the law—whose sole legitimate object is the happiness of the people—should interpose to prevent it. The presumption against such an interference with individual liberty must always be very weighty, and there are many considerations which tend to strengthen it. Of all forms of wretchedness, that resulting from an unhappy marriage is perhaps the most difficult to anticipate, for it may result from a turn of disposition or an infirmity of temper which is only revealed by the most intimate knowledge. In all ages and countries a vast proportion of these life-long contracts have either been negotiated by the relations of the contracting parties, with only their nominal consent, or have been entered into at an age when there can be little knowledge of life or character, when the judgment is still unformed, or under the influence of a passion which is proverbially fitted to distort it. It is also a well recognised fact that, as Swift says, the art of 'making nets' is very different from the art of 'making cages,' that many of the qualities peculiarly fitted to attract men into marriage are also peculiarly unfitted to secure the happiness of a home. It may be added that while the chances of unhappiness in this contract are so many, that unhappiness may easily rise to an amount of moral misery no other condition can produce, for it extends to and embitters the minutest details of daily life, pervades every sphere and depresses every aim. In many cases marriage involves to the weaker party a tyranny so brutal, galling, incessant, and at the same time absolutely hopeless, that it forms the nearest earthly type of eternal damnation. In such cases it would be much more reasonable to speak of the sacrament of divorce than of the sacrament of marriage, and it were hard to say what benefit issues from the contract, unless it be that of relieving death of half its terror by depriving life of all its charm. Thousands of couples who, if freed from the effects of one great mistake, possess all the elements of usefulness and enjoyment, are thus condemned by law to the total sacrifice of the happiness of their lives. Nor are the moral effects less disastrous. No condition can be more fitted to break down and degrade the moral character than that I have described. No

condition can present stronger temptations. A moralist may very reasonably doubt whether even open profligacy is more debasing than a legitimate union, in which hatred has taken the place of love, and the unspoken day-dream of each partner is to witness the burial of the other.

It is added that even if the law imposed no restrictions on divorce, perpetual monogamous attachments would always be the most common, for the simple reason that they are those which are most conducive to the happiness of men. They have in their support one of the strongest of all human sentiments—the cohesion of custom. In no other case is this cohesion so powerful, for in no other is the relation so close or so constant. Putting aside the idle cant of satirical writers, every candid observer will admit that the death of a husband or a wife is usually, without exception, the greatest calamity that can befall the survivor. With such a voluntary cohesion severance would be very rare unless there were some strong reason to overcome it, and when so strong a reason exists it would probably be advisable. The birth of children, which makes the stability of the family peculiarly necessary, contributes in itself to secure it, for every child joins its parents by a new bond. Nature has abundantly provided for the stability of the marriage state when it promotes happiness. Why should the law prevent its dissolution when it produces pain?

The answer is that these arguments underrate the violence of a passion which is, perhaps, the most dangerous and unruly in human nature, and at the same time neglect to make sufficient allowance for the inequality of the sexes. In the marriage contract the woman is the weaker; she is usually the poorer; her happiness is far more absolutely bound up with her domestic life than the happiness of a man. Her vigour passes before that of her husband. If cast out at a mature age from the domestic circle her whole life is broken, and the very probability of such a fate is sufficient to embitter it. If divorce could always be effected without delay, difficulty, expense, or blame; if the law provided no protection for the weaker partner against those violent passions which may be conceived by one sex in mature age, and which are rarely inspired by the other except in youth, it is easy to predict what would be the result. The

tie of custom would in innumerable cases be snapped by the impulse of passion. Very many would never pass that painful novitiate, when tastes and habits have not yet assimilated, which is now so often the preface to many years of uninterrupted happiness. In many cases the mere decline of physical charms would lead to a severance of the bond. The appetite for change would grow with the means of gratifying it, and thus affections would be weakened, habits would be unsettled, and insecurity, and misery would be widely spread. Nor would the evil stop here. The stability of domestic life is of vital importance to the position, the education, and the moral culture of the young, and to the maintenance among all classes of those steady and settled habits that are most valuable to the community.

It is not necessary in this place to pursue this subject into detail, or to discuss the exact amount of restriction which in these cases can be judiciously imposed. It is plain that the marriage tie is not one of those which the legislator can deal with on the principle of unlimited freedom of contract. It is also, I think, plain that the complete ascendancy in law of the secular view of marriage must sooner or later lead to a greater extension of the liberty of divorce than in England, at least, is admitted. The condemnation of either partner for any of the graver or more degrading forms of criminal offence, and even habits of inveterate and systematic drunkenness, might very reasonably be made legal causes. The question whether the desire of the two contracting parties, who have discovered that the contract into which they had entered is prejudicial to their happiness, should be regarded as a sufficient ground is a much more difficult one. It is clear, however, that a legislator who accorded such latitude would be perfectly justified in imposing upon both parties such a period of probation or delay as would meet the cases of fickleness or sudden passion, and on the stronger party such special burdens as would to some extent equalise the balance of interest. But his judgment on this matter should be formed solely by an estimate of consequences. He must strike the balance between opposing evils, and his point of view is thus wholly different from that of the theologian who starts with the belief that divorce is in itself necessarily sacrilegious. This is a matter for the conscience and judgment of individuals, but not for the cog-

nisance of law. In the Marriage Act of Lord Hardwicke the question of divorce was not directly raised, but the modern legal doctrine of marriage was fully established by the clause which treated matrimonial contracts as absolute nullities, though they were celebrated with a regular religious ceremony, if certain legal requirements were wanting. The dissolution of religious marriages for temporal reasons was, indeed, not altogether new in British law. In the Regency Bill, which was passed on the death of the Prince of Wales in 1751, there was a clause annulling any marriage contracted by the young heir to the throne before the expiration of his minority without the consent of the Regent, or of the major part of the Council; and a similar principle was involved in the Irish law annulling marriages between Protestants and Catholics, celebrated by priests or degraded clergymen. The Marriage Act of 1753, however, gave this principle a much greater extension. It was justly noticed as a striking illustration of the decline of dogmatic theology in England that a bill involving so important a principle should have passed without serious difficulty through the House of Lords, and should have been assented to by the whole bench of bishops.[1]

In the House of Commons, however, the Marriage bill was fiercely assailed. Henry Fox, who had himself a very natural predilection for the old system, though a member of the Government, met it with the most determined and acrimonious opposition, and he found a considerable body of supporters. Their arguments will now appear to most men very inconclusive. Much was said on such topics as the natural right of all men to be married as they pleased, the immorality that would ensue from any measure which rendered marriages difficult, the tendency of the new Bill to increase the despotic power of parents, and the advantages of the old system in assisting younger sons in marrying heiresses, and thus dispersing fortunes which under the law of primogeniture had been unduly accumulated.[2] Such arguments could have no real weight in the

[1] Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. pp. 146, 342.

[2] It is curious to observe what nonsense Horace Walpole talked about this Bill, not in a party speech, but in a grave history. He says that it 'seemed to annex as sacred privileges to birth as could be devised in the proudest, poorest little Italian principality,' that it was 'the bane of society, the golden grate that separates the nobility from the plebeians,'

face of the glaring and scandalous evils of Fleet marriages, and the law as remodelled by Lord Hardwicke continued in force until the present century. It is evident, however, that the monopoly which the Anglican clergy possessed of celebrating legal marriages could not be accepted by other sects as a final settlement of the question, and as the principle of religious equality became more fully recognised in English politics, a serious and at last successful agitation arose against the Act. There were also some legal flaws in it which somewhat qualified the admiration with which it was regarded by lawyers.[1] Such as it was, however, it was effectual in suppressing a great scandal and a great evil which had taken deep root in the habits of the nation. With large classes of the community the easy process of Fleet marriages was very popular. On the day before the new law came into force no less than 300 were celebrated, and a bold attempt was made by a clergyman named Wilkinson to perpetuate the system at the Savoy. He claimed, by virtue of some old privileges attaching to that quarter, to be extra-parochial, and to have the right of issuing licences himself, and he is said to have actually celebrated as many as 1,400 clandestine marriages after the Marriage Act had passed. By the instrumentality of Garrick, one of whose company had been married in this manner in 1756, a Savoy licence passed into the hands of the Government, and the trial and transportation of Wilkinson and his curate put an end to clandestine marriages in England. Those who desired them, however, found a refuge in Scotland, the Isle of Man, and Guernsey; and in 1760 there were always vessels ready at Southampton to carry fugitive lovers to the latter island.[2]

The measures I have enumerated, though very important, were for the most part remedies applied to some great and crying evils which had at last become intolerable to the community. Of the active reforming and philanthropic spirit which became so con-

that 'from beginning to end of the Bill one only view had predominated, that of pride and of aristocracy.'—*Memoirs of George II.* i. 336–348, 358.

[1] See Lord Campbell's severe judgment of it. *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 262.

[2] See J. Southerden Burns' very curious *Hist. of Fleet Marriages*; the copious extracts from the Fleet registers in Knight's *Hist. of London*; Pennant's *London*; Smollett's *Hist.*; *Parl. Hist.*; and Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*

spicuous in the reign of George III. we find scarcely any traces. Something of this spirit may be detected in the creation of the great religious societies, and in part of the legislation of William. Something of it appeared, though in a more exclusively ecclesiastical form, during the clerical reaction under Anne, but during the ascendency of Walpole and the Pelhams it almost wholly died away. The Methodist movement was as yet in its purely religious stage; the Court and Government initiated nothing, and the number of private reformers was very small. The scheme of Berkeley for founding a Christian university in Bermuda for the civilisation and conversion of America was one of the few examples. This most extraordinary man, who united the rarest and most various intellectual gifts with a grace and purity of character, and an enthusiasm of benevolence, that fascinated all about him, succeeded for a time in communicating something of his own spirit to some of the most selfish of politicians. The story is well known how his irresistible eloquence turned the ridicule of the Scriblerus Club into a brief but genuine outburst of enthusiasm; how he raised by subscription a considerable sum for carrying out his scheme, Walpole himself contributing 200*l.*; how his success in canvassing the Members of Parliament was so great that the Bill for endowing the university passed in 1726 with only two dissentient voices. Walpole was astonished at the success, having, as he said, 'taken it for granted the very preamble of the Bill would have secured its rejection,' but although he promised 20,000*l.* he never paid it, and in 1731 Berkeley, receiving a private intimation that it was hopeless expecting it, was obliged to abandon the enterprise, and returned from Rhode Island to Ireland.

A more successful reformer was James Oglethorpe, a very remarkable man, whose long life of 96 years was crowded with picturesque incidents and with the most various and active benevolence. Having served as a young man under Prince Eugene, he entered Parliament in 1722, and sat there for thirty-three years. Though a man of indomitable energy, and of some practical and organising talent, he had no forensic ability, and he was both too hot-tempered, too impulsive, and too magnanimous to take a high rank among the adroit and intriguing

politicians of his time. He would probably have remained an undistinguished Member of Parliament if it had not happened that among his acquaintances was a gentleman named Castell, who, having fallen from a considerable position into hopeless debt, had been imprisoned in the Fleet, and being unable to pay the accustomed fees to the warder, had been confined in a house where the small-pox was raging, and had perished by the disease. This incident directed the attention of Oglethorpe to the management of the prisons. For many years it had been known that debtors in England were subject to frightful privations, and a book had been published as early as 1691 enumerating their wrongs,[1] but no steps had been taken to redress them. Oglethorpe, however, succeeded in 1729 in obtaining a Parliamentary inquiry into the condition of the Fleet and the Marshalsea, which was afterwards extended to that of the other jails, and the results were so horrible that they produced a universal cry of indignation. It appeared that the wardenship of the Fleet was regularly put up for sale, that it had been bought from the great Lord Clarendon by John Huggins for 5,000*l.*, that it had been sold by Huggins to Bambridge for the same sum in 1728, and that these men were accustomed, in addition to the large regular emoluments of the office, to exact heavy fees from the prisoners, and to avenge themselves upon those who were unable or unwilling to pay them, by the utmost excesses of brutality. In the Fleet, when Bambridge was governor, such prisoners were continually left manacled for long periods in a dungeon, almost unendurable from its stench and its want of ventilation, situated above a common sewer, and in which the bodies of those who died in the prison were deposited to await the coroner's inquest. One brave soldier had been falsely accused of theft, acquitted by the jury, and then seized and imprisoned as a debtor by the jailer on account of the jail-fees that were incurred during his detention. Cases were proved of debtors who, being unable to pay their fees, were locked up, like Castell, with prisoners suffering from small-pox, and thus rapidly destroyed; of others who were reduced almost to skeletons by

[1] See on this subject Muralt's *Letters on the English* (Eng. trans. 1726), p. 69. In 1711 the Irish Convocation ordered a special form of prayer 'for imprisoned debtors' to be inserted in the Irish Prayer-book. Mant's *Hist. of the Irish Church*, ii. p. 233.

insufficient food, of sick women who were left without beds, without attendance, and without proper nourishment, till they died of neglect; of men who were tortured by the thumbscrew, or who lingered in slow agony under irons of intolerable weight. One poor Portuguese had been left for two months in this condition. Another prisoner had lost all memory and all use of his limbs from the sufferings he underwent. Great numbers perished through want of the most ordinary care. It appears, indeed, to have been the deliberate intention of the governor to put an end to some of his prisoners, either because they were unable to pay fees, or because they had for some reason incurred his resentment, or in order that he might obtain the small remnants of their property. In Newgate, and in some of the provincial prisons in England, almost equal atrocities were discovered. In Dublin—where inquiries were instituted with commendable promptitude by the Irish Parliament—it was found that a tax was systematically laid upon each prisoner to provide strong drink for the jail, that the worst criminals were mingled with the debtors, and that a tyranny not less brutal than that of the Fleet, was exercised by the jailer. One wretched man, crippled by a broken leg, was left for two months in a bed to which the water frequently rose, and which rotted away beneath him.[1] In most large prisons the jail fever, produced by squalor, overcrowding, bad drainage, insufficient nourishment, and insufficient exercise, made fearful ravages, and sometimes, by a righteous retribution, it spread from these centres through the rest of the community. This evil was already noticed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The 'Black Assize' at Oxford, in 1577, was long remembered, when the Chief Baron, the Sheriff, and about 300 men died within forty hours. Bacon described the jail fever as 'the most pernicious infection next to the plague, . . . whereof we have had in our time experience twice or thrice, when both the judges that sat upon the jail, and numbers of those who attended the business, or were present, sickened and

[1] Howell's *State Trials*, xvii. *Parl. Hist.* viii. 708–753. Nichol's *Life of Hogarth*, p. 19. *Historical Register*, 1729. Wright's *Memoirs of Oglethorpe*. Andrew's *Eighteenth Century*, pp. 294–298. Mr. Froude (*English in Ireland*, i. 591–592) has enumerated many of the atrocities in the Dublin prison. He has *not* mentioned that the inquiry which revealed them was a consequence of the discovery of similar atrocities in the principal prisons of England.

died.' In 1730 Chief Baron Pengelly, Serjeant Shippen, and many others, were killed by jail fever when attending the Dorsetshire Assizes, and the High Sheriff of Somersetshire perished through the same cause. In the Scotch rebellion no less than 200 men in a single regiment were infected by some deserters. The army and navy, indeed, through the operation of the press-gang, which seized numbers just released from prison, was peculiarly exposed to the contagion, and it was said by a good judge, that the mortality produced by the jail fever was greater than that produced by all other causes combined. In 1750 the disease raged to such an extent in Newgate that at the Old Bailey Assizes two judges, the Lord Mayor, an alderman, and many of inferior rank were its victims. From that time sweet-smelling herbs were always placed in the prisoner's dock to counteract the contagion.[1]

Something was done by new prison regulations, and by the removal and prosecution of some of the worst offenders, to remedy the evil; but still the condition of the prisons continued till a much later period a disgrace to English civilisation. The miseries of the imprisoned debtor were commemorated in the poetry of Thomson, and by the pencil of Hogarth, and they furnished the subject of some of the most pathetic pages of Fielding and Smollett. As late as 1741 it was announced that two prisoners had died of extreme want in the Marshalsea in Dublin, and that several others were reduced to the verge of starvation.[2] In 1759 Dr. Johnson computed the number of imprisoned debtors at not less than 20,000,[3] and asserted that one of four died every year from the treatment they underwent.

The exposure of the abuses in the English prisons by no means exhausted the philanthropic energies of Oglethorpe. Like Berkeley, his imagination was directed towards the West, and he conceived the idea of founding a colony in which poor debtors on attaining their freedom might find a refuge. A charter was obtained in 1732. Private subscriptions flowed largely in, and with the consent of Berkeley the proceeds of the sale of

[1] *Howard on Prisons*, Introduction. Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 296-297.

[2] *Dublin Gazette*, March 17-21, 1740-41.

[3] *Idler*, No. 38. Johnson afterwards, in reprinting the *Idler*, admitted that he had found reasons to question the accuracy of this calculation.

some lands, which Parliament had voted for the Bermuda scheme, were appropriated to the new enterprise. Early in 1733 the colony of Georgia was founded, and Oglethorpe for many years was its governor. Besides giving a refuge to needy classes from England the colony was intended to exercise a civilising and missionary influence upon the surrounding Indians; and in its charter Oglethorpe inserted a most memorable clause, absolutely prohibiting the introduction of slaves. Georgia became a centre of the Moravian sect, the scene of the early labours of the Wesleys, and afterwards of Whitefield, and the asylum of many of the poor Protestants who had been driven, on account of their religion, from the bishopric of Salzburg. The administration of Oglethorpe was marred by some faults of temper and of tact, but it was on the whole able, energetic, and fortunate. When hostilities broke out with Spain he conducted the war with brilliant courage and success, and he succeeded in materially diminishing the atrocities which had hitherto accompanied Indian warfare. He became a general and served in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, but was repulsed with some loss at the village of Clifton; and though acquitted by a court of inquiry, his conduct during this campaign threw a certain shadow over his military reputation. He succeeded, in 1749, in carrying through Parliament a Bill exempting the Moravians in England from the necessity of violating their religious sentiments by taking oaths or bearing arms. He was one of the first men who recognised the rising genius of Johnson; and in his old age he was the intimate friend of Johnson, Goldsmith, and Burke. His singularly varied and useful life terminated in 1785.[1]

With these exceptions, probably the only considerable trace of warm and disinterested philanthropy in the sphere of politics during the period I am describing was the vote of 100,000*l.* in 1755 for the relief of the distressed Portuguese, after the great earthquake at Lisbon. In no respect does the legislation of this period present a more striking contrast to that of the

[1] Wright's *Life of Oglethorpe*. See, too, the many allusions to him in Boswell's *Johnson*. H. Walpole always depreciates Oglethorpe. Pope has devoted a well-known couplet to him.

> One driven by strong benevolence of soul
> Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole.
> *Imitation of Horace*, Ep. ii.

See, too, Wesley's *Journal* and Tyerman's *Life of Wesley*.

nineteenth century than in the almost complete absence of attempts to alleviate the social condition of the poorer classes, or to soften the more repulsive features of English life. The public press had not yet undertaken that minute and searching investigation into abuses, which is the most useful of all its functions; and the general level of humanity in the community was little, if at all, higher than in the preceding generation. The graphic and terrible picture which is given in 'Roderick Random' of the hardships endured by the common sailors on board a man-of-war, was derived from the actual experience of the author, when serving in 1741 as surgeon's mate in the expedition against Carthagena[1]; and those who read it will hardly wonder that it was found impossible in time of war to man the royal navy without having constant recourse to the press-gang.[2] The condition of the army was little better. It appears from a memorial drawn up in 1707 that the garrison of Portsmouth was reduced by death or desertion to half its former number in less than a year and a half, through sickness, want of firing, and bad barracks, and the few new barracks that were erected were built with the most scandalous parsimony, and crowded to the most frightful excess.[3] The African slave-trade was still an important branch of British enterprise. A few isolated voices, as we shall hereafter see, had been raised against it, but they had as yet made no sensible impression on the public mind, and no less a statesman than the elder Pitt made its development a main object of his policy. The penal code was not only atrociously sanguinary and continually aggravated by the addition of new offences; it was also executed in a manner peculiarly fitted to brutalise the people. In some respects, it is

[1] That it is not exaggerated is abundantly shown by Lind's *Essay on the Health of Seamen*, which was first published in 1757. This author says (ch. i.), 'I have known 1,000 men confined together in a guardship, some hundreds of whom had neither a bed nor so much as a change of linen. I have seen many of them brought into hospital in the same clothes and shirts they had on when pressed several months before.'

[2] Pelham, in 1749, endeavoured to abolish impressment by maintaining a reserve of 3,000 seamen, who were to receive a pension in time of peace, and to be called into active service in time of war; but the Bill was violently opposed and eventually dropped (Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 66–70). A somewhat similar measure, but on a larger scale, had actually passed under William, but it was repealed in the ninth year of Anne (Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 683).

[3] Clode's *Military Forces of the Crown*, i. 222.

true, it may be compared favourably with the criminal procedures of the Continent. English law knew nothing of torture or of arbitrary imprisonment, or of the barbarous punishment of the wheel, and no English executions were quite so horrible as those which took place in the Cevennes in the early years of the eighteenth century, or as the prolonged and hideous agonies which Damiens endured for several hours, in 1757. But this is about all that can be said. Executions in England till very lately have been a favourite public spectacle—it may almost be said a public amusement—and in the last century everything seemed done to make the people familiar with their most frightful aspects. A ghastly row of heads of the rebels of 1745 mouldered along the top of Temple Bar. Gallows were erected in every important quarter of the city, and on many of them corpses were left rotting in chains. When Blackstone wrote, there were no less than 160 offences in England punishable with death, and it was a very ordinary occurrence for ten or twelve culprits to be hung on a single occasion, for forty or fifty to be condemned at a single assize. In 1732 no less than seventy persons received sentence of death at the Old Bailey,[1] and in the same year we find no less than eighteen persons hung in one day in the not very considerable town of Cork.[2] Often the criminals staggered intoxicated to the gallows, and some of the most noted were exhibited for money by the turnkeys before their execution. No less than 200*l.* are said to have been made in this manner in a few days when Sheppard was prisoner in Newgate.[3] Dr. Dodd, the unhappy clergyman who was executed for forgery, was exhibited for two hours in the press-room at a shilling a-head before he was led to the gallows.[4]

'The executions of criminals,' wrote a Swiss traveller in the beginning of the eighteenth century, 'return every six weeks regularly with the sessions. The criminals pass through

[1] Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 271.

[2] *Dublin Weekly Journal*, April 22, 1732. See, too, Madden's *Hist. of Periodical Literature in Ireland*, i. 258; and for an almost equally striking instance in 1787 at Worcester, Robert's *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, p. 152.

[3] Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, i. p. 158.

[4] *Public Ledger*, quoted by Andrews, p. 281.

the streets in carts, dressed in their best clothes, with white gloves and nosegays, if it be the season. Those that die merrily or that don't at least show any great fear of death, are said to die like gentlemen; and to merit this encomium most of them die like beasts, without any concern, or like fools, having no other view than to divert the crowd. . . . Though there is something very melancholy in this, yet a man cannot well forbear laughing to see these rogues set themselves off as heroes by an affectation of despising death. . . . . The frequent executions, the great numbers that suffer together, and the applauses of the crowd, may contribute something to it, and the brandy which they swallow before their setting out helps to stun them.'[1] Women who were found guilty of murdering their husbands, or of the other offences comprised under the terms high or petit treason, were publicly burnt, by a law which was not abolished till 1790.[2] A stake ten or eleven feet high was planted in the ground. An iron ring was fastened near the top, and from it the culprit was hung while the faggots were kindled under her feet. The law enjoined that she should be burnt alive, but in practice the sentence was usually mitigated, and she was strangled before the fire touched her body. A horrible case, however, occurred in 1726 at the execution of a murderess named Katherine Hayes. The fire scorching the hands of the executioner, he slackened the rope before he strangled her, and though fresh faggots were hastily piled up, a considerable time elapsed before her agonies were terminated.[3] The law which condemned a man guilty of high treason to be cut down when half hung, to be disembowelled, and to have his bowels burnt before his face, was still executed in ghastly detail.[4] The law which condemned a prisoner who refused to plead on a capital charge to be laid naked on his

[1] Muralt's *Letters on the English Nation* (English trans. 1726), pp. 42–44.

[2] 'In treasons of every kind the punishment of women is the same, and different from that of men. For as the natural modesty of the sex forbids the exposing and publicly mangling their bodies, their sentence (which is to the full as terrible to the sense as the other) is, to be drawn to the gallows and there to be burnt alive.'—*Blackstone*, iv. ch. 6.

[3] Andrews, p. 279. See too, her life, in *The Lives of Eminent Criminals executed between* 1720 *and* 1735.

[4] See Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 281. Eight persons guilty of holding commissions in the army of the Pretender, were executed in 1746 on Kennington Common. The *State Trials* (xviii. 351) give the following descrip-

back in a dark room, while weights of stone or iron were placed on his breast till he was slowly pressed to death, was enforced in England in 1721 and in 1735, and in Ireland as late as 1740. A criminal was sentenced in England to the same fate in 1741, but he at last consented to plead; and the law was not repealed till 1771.[1] The punishment of the pillory, which was very common, seemed specially adapted to encourage the brutality of the populace, and there are several instances of culprits who perished from the usage they underwent. Men, and even women, were still whipped publicly at the tail of a cart through the streets, and the flogging of women in England was only abolished in 1820.[2]

On the whole, however, the institutions and manners of the country were steadily assuming their modern aspect. From the ministry of Walpole the House of Commons had become indisputably the most powerful body in the State. Then it was that the post of First Lord of the Treasury came to be universally recognised as the head of the Government. Then it was that the forms of parliamentary procedure were in many respects definitely fixed. In 1730 the absurd practice of drawing up the written pleadings in the law courts in Latin was abolished,

tion of the execution of Mr. Townley, who was one of them. 'After he had hung six minutes he was cut down, and, having life in him as he lay upon the block to be quartered, the executioner gave him several blows on his breast, which not having the effect required, he immediately cut his throat; after which he took his head off; then ripped him open and took out his bowels and heart and threw them into the fire, which consumed them; then he slashed his four quarters and put them with the head into a coffin.'

[1] Andrews, pp. 285–286. The last case is from the *Universal Spectator*, Sept. 1741. 'On Tuesday, was sentenced to death at the Old Bailey, Henry Cook, shoemaker, of Stratford, for robbing Mr. Zachary on the highway. On Cook's refusing to plead there was a new press made and fixed in the proper place in the press-yard, there having been no person pressed since the famous Spiggott, the highwayman, about twenty years ago. Burnworth, alias Frazier, was pressed at Kingston, in Surrey, about sixteen years ago.' — The Irish case was at Kilkenny. Madden, *Periodical Literature*, i. p. 274.

[2] See the very large collection of passages from old newspapers and magazines, illustrating the penal system in England, in Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, and in that great repository of curious information *Notes and Queries*. See, too, Knight's *London*, Cowper's *Hist. of the Rod*, and Madden's *Hist. of Periodical Literature in Ireland*. For cases of criminals being killed by the ill-usage they underwent in the pillory, see Prior's *Life of Burke*, i. 367; Nichol's *Memoirs of Hogarth*, pp. 190–191. Johnson wrote a very humane and sensible protest against the multiplication of capital offences, *Rambler*, No. 114, and Fielding in his *Causes of the Increase of Robbers* advocated private executions. The public whipping of women in England was abolished in 1817, the private whipping only in 1820.

in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Chief Justice Lord Raymond.[1] The last impeachment of a Prime Minister was that of Walpole; the last battle fought on British soil was in the rebellion of 1745. The last traces of the old exemptions from the dominion of the law were removed by the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions in Scotland, and of the right of sanctuary in London; and the most conspicuous sign of the insular spirit of the nation disappeared when England consented to adopt the same calendar as the most civilised nations on the Continent.

It was at this time, also, that the modern military system was firmly established. An aversion to a standing army in time of peace had long been one of the strongest of English sentiments, and it was one in which both the great parties of the State cordially concurred. The Tories were never weary of dilating upon the military despotism of Cromwell, which had left an indelible impression on the mind of the nation, while the army of 30,000 men which James had maintained without the consent of Parliament furnished one of the gravest Whig charges against that sovereign. Of all the measures that accompanied the Restoration, none had been more popular than the disbandment of the army of Cromwell; but soon after, a conflict began between the Crown and the Legislature, which continually recurred with aggravated severity up to the time of the Revolution. The last two Stuart sovereigns aimed at the maintenance, in time of peace, of a considerable military force altogether subject to their control. They governed it by articles of war. They assumed, or claimed as part of their prerogative, a power unknown to the law, of administering justice, and inflicting punishments on their soldiers by courts-martial; and James, in defiance of the Test Act, had bestowed numerous military commands upon Catholics. The steady policy of Parliament, on the other hand, was to develop the militia, which it was assumed could never become inimical to the liberties of England; to insist upon the disbandment, in time of peace, of the whole army, except, perhaps, a body-guard for the King and garrisons for the forts; and to maintain the exclusion of Catholics from commands, and the principle that punishments

[1] Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 119–120.

in time of peace could only be inflicted by order of the civil magistrate. The great part which this conflict had in preparing the Revolution is well known; and an article of the Bill of Rights expressly provided that, without the consent of Parliament, the raising or keeping of a standing army within the kingdom was illegal. It soon, however, became evident to all sagacious observers that a considerable army was indispensable if England were ever to engage in a land war with Continental nations. The French army, which under Henry IV. consisted of 14,000 men, amounted, after the Peace of Nimegue, to no less than 140,000;[1] and before the close of his reign Lewis XIV. is said to have had as many as 360,000 men at one time under arms. The Emperor Charles VI. employed 170,000 soldiers in the war of 1733. The Prussian army, on the accession of Frederick the Great, consisted of 76,000 men; and every petty German ruler was augmenting his forces. The genius of Parma, Turenne, Condé, and Vauban transformed the art of war, and every improvement made a hastily levied militia more helpless before a disciplined army. Vauban and Cohorn may almost be said to have created the art of attacking and defending fortresses. Mining acquired a prominence in warfare, and was conducted with a skill formerly utterly unknown. Transportable copper pontoons for crossing rivers were invented by the French in 1672. The invention of the fixed bayonet has been attributed both to Mackay and to Vauban; and the Prussian infantry attained a perfection in manœuvring and a rapidity in firing which made every battalion a walking battery, and was speedily copied in the rest of Europe.[2]

All these changes, by giving a new perfection to the art of war, made it evident that the time had arrived when a considerable permanent body of highly trained soldiers was necessary for the security of the State; and that necessity in England was still more felt on account of the perpetual fear of a Jacobite insurrection. But a permanent army could not exist unless adequate means were provided for preserving its discipline, especially at a time when the dispositions of the troops were

[1] Heeren.

[2] Frederick II., *Mémoires de mon Temps*. See, too, for other military statistics, Ranke's *Hist. of Prussia*, i. 420-421. Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 86.

doubtful or divided. The declaration of 800 soldiers at Ipswich in favour of James in 1689 produced the first Mutiny Act, which was enacted for six months, and which enabled courts-martial to punish mutiny and desertion by death.[1] The press-gang soon came into use, and it was much employed in time of war as a kind of irregular police; suspected criminals, or notorious bad characters, against whom no definite charge could be proved, being in this manner draughted in great numbers into the army. An Act of Anne gave justices of the peace express power to levy as soldiers such able-bodied men in their districts as had 'no lawful calling or employment, or visible means for their maintenance or livelihood.'[2]

There are few more curious pages in English history than the slow and gradual change of public opinion on the subject of standing armies. For more than half a century the battle continued with almost unabated violence, and a century had elapsed before it altogether subsided. The Mutiny Act was regarded as a purely temporary contrivance, but it was soon felt by most experienced men that it was impossible to govern the army if military insubordination or desertion were treated as mere breaches of contract, and were punishable only by the civil courts. The Mutiny Act was accordingly re-enacted, sometimes for six months, more frequently for a year, but it was long before it was recognised as permanently necessary. In the reigns of William and Anne there were several periods—one of them lasting for more than two years—in which it was not in force, and its invariable enactment dates only from George I. Its opponents dwelt upon the danger of severing by a special code of laws the members of the army from their fellow citizens, and of tampering with the great constitutional principle that the civil magistrate in time of peace should have sole jurisdiction for the suppression of crime; and they urged that to permit the sovereign, of his own authority, to establish articles of war, and erect courts-martial for enforcing them, was to vest a sole legislative power in the Crown. On these grounds Windham and Shippen, at the head of the Tory party, strenuously opposed the Mutiny Act. Walpole took the same course, when he was in opposition to Stanhope, and his saying that 'he who gives the power

[1] Macaulay's *Hist.* [2] 3 & 4 Anne, ch. 11.

of blood gives blood' was continually quoted by its opponents. In 1717 the power of inflicting capital punishment by sentence of courtmartial on deserters and mutineers was only carried by 247 to 229,[1] and most of the extensions which the Act underwent were fiercely contested. The Act of 1689 provided only for the punishment of mutiny and desertion, without exempting any officer or soldier from the ordinary processes of law, and its operation was restricted to the regular army and to England. The scope of the Act was gradually extended to Jersey and Guernsey, to Ireland, and at length to the whole dominion of the Crown. The Mutiny Act of 1713, which was the first passed in time of peace, gave courts-martial no power to award a capital sentence, and this incapacity continued till the rebellion of 1715. Under George I. the Crown for the first time obtained an express and formal authority to constitute, under royal sign manual, articles of war for the government of the army, and to enforce their penalties by courts-martial. The articles of war of 1717 made provision for the trial of ordinary civil offences by courts martial, and the Mutiny Act declared that acquittal or conviction should be a bar to all further indictment for the same offence. In 1728, however, a question arose whether the articles of war which emanated from the sovereign alone, could create capital offences unknown to the law, and the Attorney-General advised the Government that while the power of inflicting other penalties by those articles was unrestricted, no sentence extending to life or limb could be imposed by court-martial except for offences enumerated in, and made so punishable by, the Mutiny Act; and a clause to this effect has been inserted in every Mutiny Act since 1748. In 1748, too, an oath of secrecy was first imposed upon the members of courts-martial forbidding them to divulge the sentence till approved, or the votes of any member unless required by Parliament. The position of half-pay officers was long and vehemently discussed. It was contended by the Government that they were subject to the Mutiny Act, but the opinions of the judges were divided on the question. A special clause making them liable was inserted in the Act of 1747, but it was withdrawn in 1749, and in 1785 their exemption was decided. In 1754 the operation of the Mutiny Act was extended

[1] See the remarkable account of the debate in *Tindal.*

to the troops of the East India Company serving in India, and to the king's troops serving in North America, as well as to local troops serving with them. In 1756 the militia, when called out for active service, were brought under its provisions; and in 1788, in spite of the strong opposition of Fox and Sheridan, the corps of sappers and miners was included in the same category.[1]

The extreme distrust with which this department of legislation was regarded is shown by the strong opposition that was aroused over almost all the questions I have enumerated. The first volume of the Commentaries of Blackstone was published as late as 1765, and it is remarkable that even at this date that great lawyer spoke with the strongest apprehension of the dangers to liberty arising from the Mutiny Act. He maintained that the condition of the army was that of absolute servitude; and he argued that every free and prudent nation should endeavour to prevent the introduction of slavery into the midst of it; that if it has unhappily been introduced, arms should at least never be placed in the hands of the slaves, and that no policy could be more suicidal than to deprive of the liberties of the constitution the very men who are at the last resort entrusted with their defence.[2] But whatever plausibility there may be in such reasoning, it will now hardly be disputed that a body of many thousands of armed men, whose prompt and unreasoning obedience is of the utmost moment to the State, cannot be permanently governed by the mild and tardy processes of law which are applicable to civilians. Military insubordination is so grave and, at the same time, so contagious a disease, that it requires the promptest and most decisive remedies to prevent it from leading to anarchy. By retaining a strict control over the pay and over the numbers of the soldiers, by limiting each Mutiny Act to a single year, and by entrusting its carriage through the House to a civil minister, who is responsible for its provisions, Parliament has very effectually guarded against abuses; and the army, since the days of the Commonwealth, has never been inimical to the liberties of England.

[1] See, for the origin of the Mutiny Act, Macaulay's *Hist. of England*, ch. xi., and for its subsequent history, Clode's *Military Forces of the Crown*, vol. i.

[2] Blackstone, book i. ch. 13.

The jealousy that was felt about the Mutiny Act extended to other parts of military administration. After the Peace of Ryswick, Parliament insisted on reducing the forces to 10,000 men, or about a third part of what William considered necessary for the security of the State; and during the greater part of the first two Hanoverian reigns there was an annual conflict about the number of the forces. In 1717 Walpole himself, being at this time in Opposition, was prominent in urging their reduction from 16,000 to 12,000 men. During his own administration the army in time of peace was usually about 17,000 men. The terror which was produced by the Scotch invasion of 1745, the frequent alarms of a French invasion, the popularity of the wars of the elder Pitt, and the great extension of the empire resulting from his conquests, gradually led to increased armaments; nor was the growth of the regular army seriously checked by the organisation, between 1757 and 1763, of a national militia. In the early years of the eighteenth century the number of soldiers in Parliament was much complained of, and some unsuccessful efforts were made to diminish it.[1] Walpole desired to avail himself of the military as of other forms of patronage for the purpose of gratifying his supporters and thus securing his parliamentary majority; but George II., to his great credit, steadily refused to allow the army to be dragged into the vortex of corruption,[2] though he consented to deprive the

[1] In 1741 some members of the House of Lords drew up a very remarkable protest on this subject. After complaining of the increase of the army, and of the formation of new corps, they say: 'We apprehend that this method of augmentation by new corps may be attended with consequences fatal in time to our Constitution, by increasing the number of commissions which may be disposed of with regard to parliamentary influence only... Our distrust of the motives of this augmentation which creates at once 370 officers . . . ought to be the greater so near the election of a new parliament . . . and we cannot forget that an augmentation of 8,040 men was likewise made the very year of the election of the present Parliament. . . . The number of officers in Parliament has gradually increased, and though we think the gentlemen of the army as little liable to undue influence as any other body of men, yet we think it would be very imprudent to trust the very fundamentals of our Constitution, the independency of Parliaments, to the uncertain effects of ministerial favour or resentment.'—Rogers's *Protests of the Lords*, ii. 1–6.

[2] Walpole himself complained to Lord Hervey, 'How many people there are I could bind to me by getting things done in the army you may imagine, and that I never can get any one thing done in it you perhaps will not believe; but it is as true as that there is an army, that I never ask for the smallest commission by which a Member of Parliament may be immediately or collaterally obliged, that the King's answer is not—"I won't do that; you want always to

Duke of Bolton and Lord Cobham of their regiments on account of their votes against the excise scheme. A Bill was at this time introduced to prevent any officer above the rank of colonel from being thus deprived, except by a court-martial or an address from one House of Parliament. Considering the great power of the ministry in both Houses, it is not surprising that this measure should have been defeated by large majorities, but it is a very remarkable fact that it should have been extremely unpopular. The manner in which Walpole exercised his power was very scandalous. The desire to restrict the corrupt influence of the Government was very strong, and the excise scheme was generally detested; but so deep and so lively after the lapse of more than seventy years was the hatred of military government which the despotism of Cromwell had planted in the nation that it was sufficient to overpower all other considerations. It was contended that the measure of the Opposition, by relaxing the authority of the civil power over the military system and by aggrandising that of the courts-martial, would increase the independence and the strength of standing armies, and in consequence the dangers of a stratocracy; and it is a curious and well-attested fact that it very seriously impaired the popularity of the party who proposed it.[1]

The last sign that may be noticed of the unpopularity of a standing army was the extreme reluctance of Parliament to provide barracks adequate for its accommodation. In Ireland, it is true, which was governed like a conquered country, a different policy was pursued, and a large grant for their erection was made as early as William III.,[2] while in Scotland they

have me disoblige all my old soldiers, you understand nothing of troops. I will order my army as I think fit; for your scoundrels in the House of Commons you may do as you please; you know I never interfere nor pretend to know anything of them, but this province I will keep to myself."' —Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 381, 382. This is not the least of the many unrecognised services of George II. to the country.

[1] Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 282–284. Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 409. *Parl. Hist.* ix. 291. William had positively refused to remove Sir G. Rooke from the Admiralty on account of his votes in the House of Commons. Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 469.

[2] Clode. Chesterfield appears to have contemplated a considerable multiplication of barracks. As his biographer somewhat strangely says: 'If his Lordship had returned to Ireland he would have ordered new barracks to be built in those parts of the kingdom which are not amenable to the laws of the country. *By this provision he wished to make the inhabitants know that there is a God*, a king, and a government.'—Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, p. 271.

chiefly date from the rebellion of 1715, but in England the barrack accommodation till a much later period was miserably insufficient.[1] Even at the time when the army had acquired very considerable dimensions the majority of the troops were still billeted out in publichouses, kept under canvas during the most inclement portions of the year, or stowed away in barns that were purchased for the purpose. Pulteney contended that the very fact that a standing army in quarters is more burdensome than a standing army in barracks is a reason for opposing the erection of the latter, lest the people should grow accustomed to the yoke.[2] 'The people of this kingdom,' said General Wade in 1740, 'have been taught to associate the ideas of barracks and slavery, like darkness and the devil.'[3] Blackstone, in 1765, strongly maintained that the soldiers should live 'intermixed with the people,' and that 'no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortress, should be allowed.'[4] It was about this time, however, that the popular jealousy of the army began first perceptibly to decline. In 1760 Lord Bath published a pamphlet which is in more than one respect very remarkable, but which is especially interesting for the evidence it furnishes of this change. He complained bitterly that the country had become strangely tolerant of a far larger peace establishment than had once been regarded as compatible with the security of the Constitution; that the members of the great families were beginning to enlist in large numbers in the army, not only in time of war, but also as a permanent profession in time of peace; and that the erection of barracks, which twenty years before would have ruined any minister who proposed it, was now accepted without serious protest, or even with popular applause.[5] Still the old feeling of distrust was not wholly

[1] Clode's *Military Forces*, i. 221–226. A writer who visited Scotland about 1722, speaking of Berwick-on-Tweed, says: 'King George, since his accession to the throne, to ease the inhabitants of this town from quartering of soldiers, hath built a fine barrack here consisting of a square spacious court of freestone. . . . These are the first barracks erected in Great Britain, and it would be a vast ease to the inhabitants in most great towns if they had them everywhere; but English liberty will never consent to what will seem a nest for a standing army.'—Macky's *Journey through Scotland* (1723), pp. 24–25.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* xi. 1443.

[3] *Ibid.* 1442.

[4] Book i. ch. 13.

[5] 'What I lament is to see the sentiments of the nation so amazingly reconciled to the prospect of having a far more numerous body of regular troops kept up after the peace than any true lover of his country in former

extinct. The scheme of fortification proposed by the younger Pitt, in 1786, was rejected on the ground that it would render necessary and would provide accommodation for a larger standing army;[1] and in 1792, when a barrack department was instituted for the purpose of erecting barracks throughout the country, a considerable opposition was shown to the scheme. Fox and Grey, as the representatives of the Whigs, vehemently denounced it in the beginning of 1793, maintaining, like Pelham, Pulteney, and Blackstone, that the erection of barracks was menacing and unconstitutional, and that the dangers of a standing army could only be averted if the soldiers were closely mixed with the populace.[2]

times thought could be allowed without endangering the Constitution. Nay, so unaccountably fond are we become of the military plan, that the erection of barracks, which twenty years ago would have ruined any minister who should have ventured to propose it, may be proposed safely by our own ministers now-a-days, and upon trial be found to be a favourite measure with our patriots and with the public in general. . . . What I lament, as the greatest misfortune that can threaten the public liberty, is to see the eagerness with which our nobility, born to be the guardians of the Constitution against prerogative, solicit the badge of military subjection, not merely to serve their country in times of danger, which would be commendable, but in expectation of being continued soldiers when tranquillity shall be restored.'—*Letter to Two Great Men* (Newcastle and Pitt), p. 35.

[1] Clode.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* xxx. 474–496.

CHAPTER IV.

I SHALL conclude this volume with a brief sketch of the leading intellectual and social changes of the period we have been examining which have not fallen within the scope of the preceding narrative. In the higher forms of intellect if we omit the best works of Pope and Swift, who belong chiefly to the reign of Anne, the reigns of George I. and George II. were, on the whole, not prolific, but the influence of the press was great and growing, though periodical writing was far less brilliant than in the preceding period. Among other writers, Fielding, Lyttleton, and Chesterfield occasionally contributed to it. The 'Craftsman' especially, though now utterly neglected, is said to have once attained a circulation of 10,000, was believed to have eclipsed the 'Spectator,' and undoubtedly contributed largely to the downfall of Walpole. Though set up by Bolingbroke and Pulteney, it was edited by an obscure and disreputable writer named Amhurst, who devoted nearly twenty years to the service of the faction, but who was utterly neglected by them in the compromise of 1742. He died of a broken heart, and owed his grave to the charity of a bookseller. We have already seen the large sum which Walpole, though in general wholly indifferent to literary merit, bestowed upon the Government press, and its writers were also occasionally rewarded by Government patronage. Thus Trenchard, the author of 'Cato's Letters,' obtained the post of 'commissioner of wine-licences' from Walpole; and Concannon, another ministerial writer, was made Attorney-General of Jamaica by Newcastle. In 1724 there were three daily and five weekly papers printed in London, as well as ten which appeared three times a week.[1] The number steadily increased, and a provincial press gradually

[1] Andrew's *Hist. of British Journalism*, i. p. 129.

grew up. The first trace of newspapers outside London is in the time of the Commonwealth, when the contending armies carried with them printing presses for the purpose of issuing reports of their proceedings; but the first regular provincial papers appear to have been created in the last decade of the seventeenth century, and by the middle of the eighteenth century almost every important provincial town had its local organ. Political caricatures, which were probably Italian in their origin,[1] came into fashion in England during the South Sea panic. Caricatures on cards, which were for a time exceedingly popular, were invented by George Townshend, in 1756.[2] As the century advanced the political importance of the press became very apparent. 'Newspapers,' said a writer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' of 1731, 'are of late so multiplied as to render it impossible, unless a man makes it his business, to consult them all. . . . Upon calculating the number of newspapers it is found that (besides divers written accounts) no less than 200 half-sheets per month are thrown from the press, only in London, and about as many printed elsewhere in the three kingdoms; . . . so that they are become the chief channels of amusement and intelligence.'[3] 'The people of Great Britain,' said Mr. Danvers in 1738, 'are governed by a power that never was heard of as a supreme authority in any age or country before. . . . It is the government of the press. The stuff which our weekly newspapers are filled with, is received with greater reverence than Acts of Parliament, and the sentiments of one of these scribblers have more weight with the multitude than the opinion of the best politician in the kingdom.'[4] 'No species of literary men,' wrote Dr. Johnson in 1758, 'has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one Gazette, but now we have not only in the

[1] In the recently published autobiography of Lord Shelburne there is a curious anecdote on the subject of caricatures. 'He [Lord Melcombe] told me that coming home through Brussels, he was presented to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, after her disgrace. She said to him, 'Young man, you come from Italy; they tell me of a new invention there called caricature drawing. Can you find me somebody that will make me a caricature of Lady Masham, describing her covered with running sores and ulcers, that I may send it to the Queen to give her a right idea of her new favourite?' (p. 122).

[2] Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* ii. 228.

[3] Advertisement to the first number of the *Gentleman's Magazine.*

[4] *Parl. Hist.* x. 448.

metropolis, papers of every morning and every evening, but 'almost every large town has its weekly historian.'[1] One of the consequences of the complete subjection of literary men to the booksellers was the creation of magazines, which afforded a more certain and rapid remuneration than books, and gave many writers a scanty and precarious subsistence. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' appeared in 1731. It was speedily followed by its rival, the 'London Magazine;' and in 1750 there were eight periodicals of this kind. In the middle of the eighteenth century also, literary reviews began in England. In 1752 there were three—the 'Literary,' the 'Critical,' and the 'Monthly.' Under George II. an additional tax of $\frac{1}{2}d.$ had been imposed on newspapers, and an additional duty of a shilling on advertisements; but the demand for this form of literature was so great that these impositions do not appear to have seriously checked it.[2] The essay writers had made it their great object as much as possible to popularise and diffuse knowledge, and to bring down every question to a level with the capacities of the idlest reader; and without any great change in education, any display of extraordinary genius, or any real enthusiasm for knowledge, the circle of intelligence was slowly enlarged. The progress was probably even greater among women than among men. Swift, in one of his latest letters, noticed the great improvement which had taken place during his lifetime in the education and in the writing of ladies;[3] and it is to this period that some of the best female correspondence in our literature belongs.

The prevailing coarseness, however, of fashionable life and sentiment was but little mitigated. The writings of Swift, Defoe, Fielding, Coventry, and Smollett are sufficient to illustrate the great difference which in this respect separated the first half of the eighteenth century from our own day, and unlike Anne, the first two Hanoverian sovereigns did nothing to improve the prevailing tone. Each king lived

[1] *The Idler*, No. 30.

[2] See, on the History of Newspapers, Chalmers' *Life of Ruddiman.* Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iv. Hunt's *Fourth Estate.* Andrews' *Hist. of British Journalism.* Madden's *Hist. of Irish Periodical Literature.* Wright's *England under the House of Hanover.*

[3] Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, i. 551.

publicly with mistresses, and the immorality of their Courts was accompanied by nothing of that refinement or grace which has often cast a softening veil over much deeper and more general corruption. On this subject the vivid and undoubtedly authentic picture of the Court of George II. which is furnished by Lord Hervey enables us to speak with much confidence. Few figures in the history of the time are more worthy of study than that shrewd and coarse-minded Queen, who by such infinite adroitness, and by such amazing condescensions, succeeded in obtaining insensibly a complete command over the mind of her husband, and a powerful influence over the politics of England. Living herself a life of unsullied virtue, discharging under circumstances of peculiar difficulty the duties of a wife with the most exemplary patience and diligence, exercising her great influence in Church and State with singular wisdom, patriotism, and benevolence, she passed through life jesting on the vices of her husband and of his ministers with the coarseness of a trooper, receiving from her husband the earliest and fullest accounts of every new love affair in which he was engaged, and prepared to welcome each new mistress, provided only she could herself keep the first place in his judgment and in his confidence. The character of their relation remained unbroken to the end. No stranger death scene was ever painted than that of Caroline,[1] nor can we easily find a more striking illustration of the inconsistencies of human nature than that a woman so coarse and cynical in her judgments of others should have herself died a victim of an excessive and misplaced delicacy.[2] The

[1] The Queen had always wished the King to marry again. 'She had often said so when he was present and when he was not present, and when she was in health, and gave it now, as her advice to him when she was dying; upon which his sobs began to rise, and his tears to fall with double vehemence. Whilst in the midst of this passion, wiping his eyes and sobbing between every word, with much ado he got out this answer: "Non, j'aurai des maîtresses." To which the Queen made no other reply than: "Ah, mon Dieu! cela n'empêche pas." I know this episode will hardly be credited, but it is literally true.' — Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 513–514.

[2] She had for fourteen years suffered from a rupture which she could not bring herself to reveal except to her husband. When on her death-bed, and suffering extreme agony, she still concealed it from her doctors, and it was contrary to her ardent wish that the King, too late to save her, told them of her complaint. Lord Hervey, ii. 505–506.

works of Richardson, which appeared between 1740 and 1753, and which at once attained an extraordinary popularity, probably contributed something to refine the tone of society, but the improvement was not very perceptible till the reign of George III. Sir Walter Scott, in a well-known anecdote, has illustrated very happily the change that had taken place. He tells us that a grand-aunt of his own assured him that the novels of Aphra Behn were as current upon the toilet table in her youth as the novels of Miss Edgeworth in her old age, and he has described very vividly the astonishment of his old relative when, curiosity leading her, after a long interval of years, to turn over the forgotten pages she had delighted in when young, she found that, sitting alone at the age of eighty, she was unable to read without shame a book, which sixty years before she had heard read out for amusement in large circles consisting of the best society in London.[1]

In one respect during the first half of the eighteenth century there was a marked deterioration. The passion for gambling, which had been very prevalent since the Restoration, appears to have attained its climax under the first two Georges. It had been very considerably stimulated by the madness of speculation which infected all classes during the South Sea mania. That desire to make rapid fortunes, that contempt for the slow and steady gains of industry which has in our own day so often produced the wildest combinations of recklessness and credulity, was never more apparent. Scheme after scheme of the most fantastic description rose, and glittered, and burst. Companies for 'Fishing up Wrecks on the Irish Coast,' for 'Insurance against Losses by Servants,' for 'Making Salt Water Fresh,' for 'Extracting Silver from Lead,' for 'Transmuting Quicksilver into Malleable and Fine Metal,' for 'Importing Jackasses from Spain,' for 'Trading in Human Hair,' for 'A Wheel for Perpetual Motion,' as well as many others, attracted crowds of eager subscribers. One projector announced a Company 'for an undertaking which shall in due time be revealed,' each subscriber to pay at once two guineas, and afterwards to receive a share of a hundred, with a disclosure of the object. In a

[1] Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, v. 136–137.

single morning he received 2,000 guineas, with which he immediately decamped.[1]

It was natural that this passion for speculation should have stimulated the taste for gambling in private life. It had long been inveterate among the upper classes, and it soon rose to an unprecedented height. The chief, or, at least, the most prominent, centre was White's chocolate-house. Swift tells us that Lord Oxford never passed it without bestowing on it a curse as 'the bane of the English nobility;' and it continued during the greater part of the century to be the scene of the wildest and most extravagant gambling. It was, however, only the most prominent among many similar establishments which sprang up around Charing Cross, Leicester Fields, and Golden Square. The Duke of Devonshire lost an estate at a game of basset. The fine intellect of Chesterfield was thoroughly enslaved by the vice. At Bath, which was then the centre of English fashion, it reigned supreme; and the physicians even recommended it to their patients as a form of distraction. In the green-rooms of the theatres, as Mrs. Bellamy assures us, thousands were often lost and won in a single night. Among fashionable ladies the passion was quite as strong as among men, and the professor of whist and quadrille became a regular attendant at their levees. Miss Pelham, the daughter of the prime minister, was one of the most notorious gamblers of her time, and Lady Cowper speaks in her 'Diary' of sittings at Court at which the lowest stake was 200 guineas. The public lotteries contributed very powerfully to diffuse the taste for gambling among all classes. They had begun in England in the seventeenth century; and though more than once forbidden, they enabled the Government to raise money with so little unpopularity that they were again resorted to. 'I cannot forbear telling you,' wrote Addison to an Irish friend in 1711, 'that last week I drew a prize of 1,000*l.* in the lottery.'[2] Fielding wrote a satire on the passion for lotteries prevalent in his time. The discovery of some gross frauds in their management contributed to throw them into discredit, and Pelham is said to have ex-

[1] Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iii.

[2] Addison to Jos. Dawson. (Dec. 18, 1711) Departmental Correspondence. Irish State Paper Office.

pressed some disapproval of them, but they were not finally suppressed in England till 1823. Westminster Bridge, which was begun in 1736, was built chiefly from the produce of lotteries. Another instance of their employment is deserving of special remembrance, for it is connected with the origin of one of the most valuable of London institutions. In 1753 lotteries were established to purchase the Sloane collection and the Harleian manuscripts, which were combined with the Cottonian collection, and deposited in Montague House under the name of the British Museum.[1]

Concerning the amusements and social life of the upper classes I shall content myself with making a few somewhat miscellaneous observations. The subject is a very large one, and it would require volumes to exhaust it; but it is, I think, possible to select from the mass of details a few facts which are not without a real historic importance, as indicating the tendencies of taste, and thus throwing some light on the moral history of the nation. It was said that the Revolution brought four tastes into England, two of which were chiefly due to Mary, and two to her husband. To Mary was due a passion for coloured East Indian calicoes, which speedily spread through all classes of the community, and also a passion for rare and eccentric porcelain, which continued for some generations to be a favourite topic with the satirists. William, on his side, set the fashion of picture-collecting and gave a great impulse to gardening.[2] This latter taste, which forms one of the healthiest elements in English country life, attained its height in the first half of the eighteenth century, and it took a form which was entirely new. In the reign of Charles II. the parks of Greenwich and St. James had been laid out by the great French gardener Le Nôtre, and the taste which he made general in Europe reigned in its most exaggerated form in England. It appeared to be a main object to compel nature to recede as far as possible, to repress every irregularity, to make the human hand apparent in every shrub, and to convert gardening into an anomalous form of sculpture. The trees were

[1] Macpherson, iii. 300. Beckmann's *Hist. of Inventions*, ii. pp. 423–429. The passion for gambling in England appears in all the correspondence and other light literature of the time.

[2] Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain*, i. 121–124.

habitually carved into cones, or pyramids, or globes, into smooth, even walls, or into fantastic groups of men and animals. The flower-beds were laid out symmetrically in architectural figures. Long, straight, and formal alleys, a perfect uniformity of design, and a constant recurrence of similar forms, were essential to a well-arranged garden. The passion for gardening, however, at this time took some root in England, and the writings of Evelyn did much to extend it. William introduced the fashion of masses of clipped yews forming the avenue or shading the approaches of the house, and of imposing iron gates. Sir William Temple, in his essay 'On the Garden of Epicurus,' accurately reflected the prevailing taste. But early in the eighteenth century two great gardeners—Bridgeman, who died in 1737, and Kent, who died in 1748—originated a new form of landscape-gardening which speedily acquired an almost universal popularity. They utterly discarded all vegetable sculpture and all symmetry of design, gave free scope to the wild, luxuriant and irregular beauties of nature, and made it their aim to reproduce, as far as possible, in a small compass its variety and its freedom. The essay in which Bacon had urged that one part of a garden should be made an imitation of unrestricted nature, the description of Paradise in Milton, and the description of the garden of Armida in Tasso, were cited as foreshadowing the change, and at a later period the poetry of Thomson undoubtedly contributed to sustain it. Addison and Pope laid out their gardens on the new plan, and defended it with their pens,[1] and the latter is said to have greatly assisted Kent by his advice. Spence and Horace Walpole were enthusiastic disciples.[2] The new system was made the subject of a graceful poem by Mason, and of an ingenious essay by Shenstone, and in 1770 appeared Whately's 'Observations on Modern Gardening,' which was the first considerable standard work in England upon the subject. The gardens of the Prince of Wales at Carlton House were imitated from that of Pope at Twickenham.[3] Kensington Gardens

[1] See Addison's papers in the *Spectator*, No. 414, 477, and Pope's very curious paper in the *Guardian*, No. 173. See, too, Pope's *Moral Essays*, Ep. 4.

[2] Spence's *Anecdotes*, xxxi. Walpole on *Modern Gardens*. See, too, his *Life of Kent*. See also, on the spread of the taste, Angeloni's *Letters on the English Nation*, ii. 266–274.

[3] Walpole on *Modern Gardening*.

were laid out by Kent on the new plan, as well as the gardens of Claremont and Esher, those of Lord Burlington at Chiswick, and those of Lord Cobham at Stowe.

The example was speedily followed, and often exaggerated,[1] in every part of England, and the revolution of taste was accompanied by a great increase in the love of gardening. In the beginning of the century there were probably not more than 1,000 species of exotics in England, but before its close more than 5,000 new kinds were introduced. When Miller published the first edition of his 'Dictionary of Gardening' in 1724, only twelve species of evergreens were grown in the island, and the number of the plants cultivated in England is said to have more than doubled between 1731 and 1768.[2] Very many were introduced from Madeira, and the West Indies, which had been explored by Sir Hans Sloane, and from the American colonies, which had been explored by several independent investigators; and the taste for botany was still more diffused by the long controversies that followed the publication in 1735 of the great discovery of Linnæus about the sexual nature of plants.[3] Landscape-gardening is said to have been introduced into Ireland by Dr. Delany, the friend of Swift, and into Scotland by Lord Kames,[4] but both countries remained in this respect far behind England. At Edinburgh a botanical garden appears to have existed as early as 1680.[5] In Ireland a florists' club was established by some Huguenot refugees in the reign of George I., but it met with no encouragement and speedily expired.[6] An Englishman named Threlkeld, who was settled in Dublin, published in 1727 'A Synopsis of Irish Plants;' and another work entitled 'Botanologia Universalis Hibernica, or a general Irish Herbal,' was published in 1735 by a writer named Keogh.[7] In England the love for gardens and for botany continually extended, and it forms one of the most remarkable features in the history of national tastes during the first half of the eighteenth century.

[1] See on these exaggerations, *The World*, Nos. 6, 15. The taste was carried so far that dead trees were sometimes planted, and every straight walk condemned.

[2] Loudon's *Encyclopædia of Gardening*, pp. 276, 277.

[3] Miller's *Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*, i. pp. 163–188.

[4] Loudon's *Encyclopædia*, pp. 269, 273.

[5] Pulteney's *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 4.

[6] Loudon's *Encyclopædia*, p. 282.

[7] Pulteney's *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 197–201.

The poet Gray, in a letter written in 1763, observes that 'our skill in gardening or laying out grounds is the only taste we can call our own, the only proof of original talent in matters of pleasure.' In architecture, it is true, England had produced one or two respectable and one really great name; and the fire of London had given Wren a noble field for the display of his genius, but in other departments of art there was an almost absolute blank. Few questions in history are more perplexing, and perhaps insoluble, than the causes which govern the great manifestations of æsthetic genius. Germany, which up to the time of the Reformation was in this respect peculiarly prolific—Germany which is now pre-eminently the land of artistic criticism, and which stands in the first rank of artistic production—can scarcely be said to have produced a single painter of real genius during the long period that elapsed between the death of Holbein and the dawn of the nineteenth century. France, the richest, the most cultivated, the most luxurious nation on the Continent, in spite of a munificent royal patronage of art, was during the same period but little more successful. Many very considerable artists, no doubt, arose; but yet the nation which appears beyond all others to possess the gift of grace and delicacy of touch, which has created the Gobelins tapestry and the Sèvres china, and has governed through a long succession of generations the taste of Europe, could boast of no painter except Claude Lorraine, who had taken absolutely a foremost place; and its art was far inferior to that which grew up in more than one small Italian province, among the canals of Holland, or in the old cities of Flanders. But of all the great civilised nations, England in this respect ranked the last. Dobson, indeed, who had been brought forward by the patronage of Vandyck, and who died at the early age of thirty-six, showed some real talent for portrait-painting, and Oliver, Hilliard, and Cooper some skill in miniature; but still, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, not a single English painter or sculptor had taken a permanent place in European art, and the number of painters, even of third or fourth rate excellence, was very small. The principal, and, indeed, the most congenial, employment of the British artist appears to have been the production

of the gaudy sign-boards which nearly every shopkeeper was then accustomed to hang out before his door.[1]

This complete barrenness of British art is in many ways remarkable. No real deficiency of imagination can be attributed to a nation which has produced the noblest poetic literature in Christendom; and something had been done to stimulate artistic taste. Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and above all, Charles I., had warmly patronised art, and the latter was one of the two greatest collectors of his time. He purchased the cartoons of Raphael and the whole collection of the Duke of Mantua, which was then the most valuable in Europe. He drew over to England both Rubens and Vandyck, and his competition with Philip IV. of Spain was so keen that it is said to have tripled the ordinary price of the works of the great artists.[2] In the early years of the eighteenth century the English were already famous for their assiduity in haunting the galleries in Italy,[3] and for their zeal in collecting pictures; and their aristocracy possessed ample wealth to enable them to gratify their desires. Catholicism is, no doubt, more favourable to art than Protestantism; but if the change of religion had in some degree impaired the appreciation of Italian or Spanish art, the English were at least in intimate connection with Holland, where a noble school existed which was essentially the creation of Protestantism. A few Italian and a long succession of Dutch and Flemish artists visited England. It possessed, indeed, an admirable school of painting, but it was a school which was represented almost exclusively by foreigners, by Holbein, Rubens, Vandyck, Lely, and Kneller. Foreign writers were accustomed to attribute the utter absence of native talent in art to the aspect of physical nature, and especially to the turbid and depressing gloom of a northern sky; but the explanation will hardly appear sufficient to those who remember that Rembrandt, Van der Helst, Potter, Gerard Dow, Cuyp, and many other artists of consummate power, grew up beneath a sky that is scarcely brighter than that of England, and in a country much less eminently endowed with natural beauty.

[1] *Spectator*, No. 28.

[2] Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, tom. ii. p. 152 (1733). Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, ch. ix.

[3] Ibid.

I do not pretend to explain fully this deficiency, but several partial solutions may be given. Puritanism was exceedingly inimical to art, and the Parliament in 1645 ordered that the pictures in the royal collection containing representations of the Second Person of the Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary, should be burnt, and that all the other pictures collected by Charles should be sold. Fortunately this very characteristic edict was not fully complied with. Cromwell succeeded in saving the cartoons of Raphael and other less important pictures for England and the world; but a great portion of the art treasures of the King were dispersed. Many of his finest pictures found their way to the Escurial, and a ply which was exceedingly hostile to art was given to a large part of the English people. In order that the artistic capacities of a nation should be largely developed, it is necessary that the great body of the people should come in frequent contact with artistic works, and that there should be institutions securing the means of artistic education. Both of these conditions were wanting in England. In ancient Greece and in modern Florence all classes of the community had the opportunity of becoming familiar with the noblest works of the chisel or of the pencil; their taste was thus gradually educated, and any artistic genius that was latent among them was awakened. But in England by far the greater number of works of art were in private hands, while Sabbatarian prejudices and the division of classes produced by an aristocratic tone of manners, effectually excluded the great mass of the people from the small number of paintings that were in public institutions. Annual exhibitions were as yet unknown.[1] The country habits of the English nobility turned their tastes chiefly in the direction of field-sports and other outdoor pursuits, and art never occupied the same prominence in their lives as it did in those of the Cardinals of Rome, or of the rich merchants of Florence, Venice, and Amsterdam. The same predilection for a country life induced most of those who were real

[1] According to Pye, the first public exhibition of British Works of Art was about 1740, when Hogarth presented a portrait to the Foundling Hospital, and other artists followed his example. In 1759 a meeting of artists resolved to establish an annual exhibition, and in the following year they, for the first time, carried their intention into effect.—Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, p. 286.

collectors to accumulate their treasures in their country-houses, where they were seen only by a few private friends, and were utterly without influence on the nation at large. In the middle of the eighteenth century, England was already very rich in private collections,[1] but the proportion of Englishmen who had ever looked at a good picture or a good statue was very small. Nor were there any means of artistic education. At Paris the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture was established as early as 1648, and in 1665 Colbert founded that admirable institution, the French Academy at Rome, for the purpose of providing young artists with the best possible instruction. In England nothing of the kind existed, and in the beginning of the eighteenth century a poor student of art could find no assistance except by private patronage. The first two Georges were absolutely indifferent to art, and although a fashion of collecting pictures had spread very widely among the English aristocracy, their patronage was neither generous nor intelligent. It was observed that portrait-painting, which touched another sentiment besides love of pure art, was the only form that was really encouraged. Painter after painter, distinguished in other branches, came over to England, but they invariably found that they could succeed only by devoting themselves to the one department which appealed directly to the vanity of their patrons.[2] 'Painters of history,' said Kneller, 'make the dead live, but do not begin to live themselves till they are dead. I paint the

[1] A list of the chief collections in England in 1766 is given in Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, pp. 145–146, and catalogues of the chief pictures contained in them will be found in a book called *The English Connoisseur: an account of whatever is curious in painting and sculpture in the palaces and seats of the nobility and gentry of England* (1766).

[2] 'No painter, however excellent, can succeed among the English, that is not engaged in painting portraits. Canaletti, whose works they admired whilst he resided at Venice, at his coming to London had not in a whole year the employment of three months. Watteau, whose pictures are sold at such great prices at present, painted never a picture but two which he gave to Dr. Mead, during the time he resided here. At the same time, Vanloo, who came hither with the reputation of painting portraits very well, was obliged to keep three or four subaltern painters for drapery and other parts.'—Angeloni's *Letters on the English* (2nd ed. 1756), vol. i. p. 97. So, too, Amiconi, a Venetian historical painter, came to England in 1729, and tried for a time to maintain a position by his own form of art, 'but,' says Horace Walpole, 'as portraiture is the one thing necessary to a painter in this country, he was obliged to betake himself to that employment much against his inclination.'—*Anecdotes of Painting*. See, too, Dallaway's *Progress of the Arts in England*, pp. 455–461.

living and they make me live.' Hogarth described portrait-painting as 'the only flourishing branch of the high tree of British art.' Barry complained that 'the difficulty of subsisting by any other species of art . . . . and the love of ease and affluence had so operated upon our youth that the country had been filled with this species of artist.' The Dutch portrait-painter Vanloo, who came to London in 1737, was so popular that, as a nearly contemporary writer tells us, 'for several weeks after his arrival, the train of carriages at his door was like that at the door of a theatre. He had some hundreds of portraits begun, and was obliged to give as many as five sittings in a day. Large bribes were given by many to the man who kept the register of his engagements, in order to accelerate their sittings, and when that was not done, it was often necessary to wait six weeks.' Vanloo remained in England only four years, but is said to have accumulated in that time considerable wealth.[1] On the other hand, it is very remarkable that, in the next generation, Wilson, the first great English landscape-painter, and Barry, the first historical painter of real talent, were both of them unable to earn even a small competence, and both of them died in extreme poverty. Vertue, who died in 1756, carried the art of engraving to considerable perfection, and was followed by Boydell and a few other native engravers. Kneller, and afterwards Thornhill, made some attempts in the first quarter of the century to maintain a private academy in England for artistic instruction, but they appear to have met with little encouragement, and the reign of George I. is on the whole one of the darkest periods in the history of English art. Early in the next reign, however, a painter of great and original genius emerged from obscurity, who, in a low form of art, attained a high, and almost a supreme, perfection. William Hogarth was born in London, of obscure parents, in 1698. His early years were chiefly passed in engraving arms, shop bills, and plates for books. He then painted portraits, some of them of singular beauty, and occasionally furnished designs for tapestry. In 1730 he secretly married the daughter of Sir James Thornhill, the fashionable artist of the day, and in 1731 he completed his 'Harlot's

[1] Rouquet, *L'État des Arts en Angleterre*, pp. 59-60.

Progress,' which proved to all good judges that, for the first time, a really great native painter had arisen in England. Had his genius been of a higher order, he would probably have been less successful. He had little charm of colouring or sense of beauty, and no power of idealising nature; but the intense realism, the admirable homeliness and truth of his pictures of English life, and the excellent morals they invariably conveyed, appealed to all classes, while their deep and various meaning, and the sombre imagination he sometimes threw over his conceptions,[1] raised them far above the level of the mere grotesque. The popularity of his designs was such that they were immensely imitated, and it was found necessary to pass an Act of Parliament, in 1735, vesting an exclusive right in designers and engravers, and restraining the multiplying of copies of works without the consent of the artist.[2] In the same reign sculpture in England was largely pursued by Rysbrack, a native of Antwerp, and by Roubiliac, a native of Lyons.

The taste for music was more widely diffused than that for painting; but although it made rapid progress in the first half of the eighteenth century, this was in no degree due to native talent. A distinguished French critic[3] has noticed, as one of the most striking of the many differences between the two great branches of the Teutonic race, that, among all modern civilised nations, the Germans are probably the most eminent, and the English the most deficient, in musical talent. Up to the close of the seventeenth century, however, this distinction did not exist, and England might fairly claim a very respectable rank among musical nations. No feature in the poetry of Shakespeare or Milton is more remarkable than the exquisite and delicate appreciation of music they continually evince, and the musical dramas known under the name of masques, which were so popular from the time of Ben Jonson to the time of the Rebellion, kept up a general taste for the art. Henry Lawes, who composed the music for 'Comus,' as well as edited the poem, and to whom Milton has paid a beautiful compliment,[4]

[1] See *e.g.* that noble sketch—the last he ever drew—called 'Finis.'

[2] 8 Geo. ii. c. 13. Nichols' *Memoirs of Hogarth*, p. 37.

[3] Renan.

[4] 'But first I must put off
These my sky-robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain

was conspicuous as a composer. Blow, in the last years of the seventeenth century, contributed much to church music; but the really great name in English music was Henry Purcell, who was born in 1658, and died in 1697, and who, in the opinion of many competent judges, deserves to rank among the very greatest composers who had up to that date arisen in Europe. In the early years of the eighteenth century, however, music was purely an exotic. The capital fact of this period was the introduction and great popularity of the Italian opera. Operas on the Italian model first appeared in England in 1705. They were at first sung in English, and by English performers; but soon after, some Italian castrati having come over, the principal characters in the dialogue sang in Italian, while the subordinate characters answered in English. After two or three years, this absurdity passed away, and the operas became wholly Italian. In 1710 the illustrious Handel first came to England, and 'Rinaldo,' his earliest opera, appeared in 1711. Bononcini, who at one time rivalled his popularity as a composer, followed a few years later. An Academy for Music was founded in 1720, and several Italian singers of the highest merit were brought over, at salaries which were then unparalleled in Europe. The two great female singers Cuzzoni and La Faustina obtained each 2,000 guineas a-year, Farinelli 1,500 guineas and a benefit, Senesino 1,400 guineas. The rivalry between Cuzzoni and La Faustina, and the rivalry between Handel and Bononcini, divided society into factions almost like those of the Byzantine empire; and the conflicting claims of the two composers were celebrated in a well-known epigram, which has been commonly attributed to Swift, but which was in reality written by Byrom.[1] The author little imagined

> That to the service of this house belongs,
> Who with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song
> Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
> And hush the waving woods.' *Comus.*

Lawes taught music in the house of Lord Bridgewater, where *Comus* was first represented.

[1] Some say that Signor Bononcini
Compared to Handel is a ninny;
Others aver that to him Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.
Strange that such difference should be
'Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee.

that one of the composers, whom he treated with such contempt, was, in his own, and that no ignoble, sphere, among the master intellects of mankind.[1]

The difficulties against which the new entertainment had to struggle were very great. Addison opposed it bitterly in the 'Spectator.' The partisans of the regular drama denounced it as an absurd and mischievous novelty. It had to encounter the strong popular prejudice against foreigners and Papists. It was weakened by perpetual quarrels of composers and singers, and it was supported chiefly by the small and capricious circle of fashionable society. In 1717 the Italian theatre was closed for want of support, but it revived in 1720 under the auspices of Handel. The extraordinary success of the 'Beggars' Opera,' which appeared in 1728, for a time threw it completely in the shade. The music of Handel was deserted, and the Italian theatre again closed. It reopened in the following year under the joint direction of Handel and of Heidegger, a Swiss, famous for his ugliness, his impudence, and his skill in organising public amusements; and it continued to flourish until a quarrel broke out between Handel and the singer Senesino. The great nobles, who were the chief supporters of the opera, took the side of the singer, set up, in 1733, a rival theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, attracted to it Heidegger and most of the best singers, made it their special object to ruin Handel, and succeeded in so governing the course of fashion that his theatre was almost deserted. The King, it is true, steadily supported him, and Queen Caroline, with the tact she usually showed in discovering the highest talent in the country, threw her whole enthusiasm into his cause; but the Prince of Wales, who was in violent opposition to his father, took the opposite side, and the Court could not save the great musician from ruin. 'The King and Queen,' says Lord Hervey, 'sat freezing constantly at his empty Haymarket opera, whilst the Prince, with the chief of the nobility, went as constantly to that of Lincoln's-Inn Fields.'[2] Handel struggled

[1] Burney's *Hist. of Music*. Schölcher's *Life of Handel*. Byrom's *Remains*, vol. i. pt. i. p. 150.

[2] Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 314. The Princess Royal was equally enthusiastic. The King said, with good-nature and good sense, 'He did not think setting oneself at the head of a faction of fiddlers a very honourable employment for people of quality, or the ruin of one poor fellow [Handel] so generous or so good-natured a scheme as to do much honour to the undertakers, whether they succeeded or not.'

for some time vainly against the stream; all the savings he had amassed were lost, and his career was for a time ended by bankruptcy in 1737.

The effect, however, was only to make him turn more exclusively to that nobler and loftier form of music in which he had no rival. Like the great blind poet of Puritanism, whom in more than one respect he resembled, he was indeed one of those whose lips the Seraphim had touched and purified with the hallowed fire from the altar; and it was only when interpreting the highest religious emotions that his transcendent genius was fully felt. If it be true that music is in modern art what painting was in the Renaissance and what sculpture was in antiquity, the name of Handel can be placed little below those of Raphael and of Phidias, and it is to his sacred music that his pre-eminence is mainly due. To recall sacred music from the neglect into which it had fallen in England had long been his desire. In 1713 he had composed a grand 'Te Deum' and 'Jubilate' in celebration of the Peace of Utrecht. From 1718 to 1721 he had been organist to the chapel of the Duke of Chandos. He introduced for the first time organ concerts into England; and, in addition to many beautiful anthems, he composed his oratorio of 'Esther' for the Duke of Chandos's chapel. Oratorios had been invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by St. Philip Neri in order to counteract the attractions of the theatre, but they had hitherto been absolutely unknown in England. 'Esther' was brought upon the public stage for the first time in 1732. It was followed in 1733 by 'Deborah' and by 'Athalie,' in 1738 by 'Israel in Egypt,' in 1740 by 'Saul.' The earliest of these great compositions were received with considerable applause, but the last two were almost utterly neglected. The musical education of the public was not sufficient to appreciate them; the leaders of fashion who professed to regulate taste in matters of art steadily and vindictively derided them; and the King and Queen incurred no small ridicule for their persistent admiration of Handel. A story is told of Chesterfield leaving the empty theatre in which an oratorio was being sung before the King, and giving as his reason that he did not desire to intrude on the privacy of his sovereign. Horace Walpole, who assumed the language of a great critic in matters of art, but whose cold

heart and feebly fastidious taste were usually incapable of appreciating any high form of excellence, sneered at Handel, as he afterwards sneered at Garrick; and it came to be looked upon in fashionable circles as one of the signs of good taste to ridicule his music.[1] Some ladies of position actually engaged a famous mimic and comic singer to set up a puppet-show in the hope of drawing away the people from Handel,[2] and with the same view they specially selected the days on which an oratorio was performed, for their card parties or concerts.[3]

There was, of course, a certain party in his favour. Arbuthnot, who was himself an excellent musician, steadily supported him. Pope, though perfectly insensible to the charm of music, resting on the opinion of Arbuthnot, took the same side. A statue of Handel by Roubiliac was erected in Vauxhall in 1738, but of the general depreciation and condemnation of his music there can be no doubt. The death of Queen Caroline, in 1737, deprived him of his warmest patron; and he composed an anthem for her funeral, which Dr. Burney regarded as the most perfect of all his works. After the bankruptcy of his theatre, and the almost total failure of his two last oratorios, he felt it necessary to bend before the storm, and he resolved for a time to fly where his works 'would be out of the reach of enmity and prejudice.' He had already composed the music for the greatest of all his works, but he would not risk its production in London, and he adopted the resolution of bringing it out for the first time in Dublin.[4]

[1] Fielding has noticed this in a characteristic passage. 'It was Mr. Western's custom every afternoon, as soon as he was drunk, to hear his daughter play on the harpsichord; for he was a great lover of music, and, perhaps, had he lived in town, might have passed as a connoisseur, for he always excepted against the finest compositions of Mr. Handel; he never relished any music but what was light and airy; and, indeed, his most favourite tunes were "Old Sir Simon, the King," "St. George he was for England," "Bobbing Joan," and some others.'—*Tom Jones*.

[2] See Smollett's poem called 'Advice,' and the accompanying note.

Again shall Handel raise his laurelled brow,
Again shall harmony with rapture glow!
The spells dissolve, the combination breaks,
And Punch, no longer Frasi's rival, squeaks.
Lo, Russel falls a sacrifice to whim,
And starts amazed in Newgate from his dream.
Line 183.

Russel was a famous mimic and singer set up by certain ladies of quality to oppose Handel. When the current of fashion changed he sank into debt, and was confined in Newgate, where he lost his reason. A small subscription was with difficulty raised among his patronesses to procure his admission into Bedlam.

[3] Schölcher.

[4] But soon, ah soon, rebellion will commence
If music meanly borrow aid from sense;

The visit of Handel to Ireland in the December of 1741 has lately been investigated in all its details,[1] and it forms a pleasing episode in the Irish history of the eighteenth century. It appears that music had for some time been passionately cultivated in the Irish capital, that a flourishing society had been formed for practising it, and that the music of Handel was already in great favour. It was customary to give frequent concerts for the benefit of Dublin charities, and one of these charities was at this time attracting great attention. The revelation of the frightful abuses in the debtors' prisons in Ireland had made a deep impression, and a society was formed for ameliorating the condition of the inmates, compounding with their creditors and releasing as many as possible from prison. In the year 1739 no less than 188 had been freed from a condition of extreme misery, and the charity still continued. It was for the benefit of this and of two older charities[2] that the 'Messiah' of Handel was first produced, in Dublin, in April 1742. In the interval that had elapsed since his arrival in Ireland its composer had abundant evidence that the animosity which had pursued him so bitterly in England had not crossed the Channel. In a remarkable letter dated December 29, written to his friend Charles Jennens,[3] who had selected the passages of Scripture for the 'Messiah,' Handel describes the success of a series of concerts which he had begun: 'The nobility did me the honour to make amongst themselves a subscription for six nights, which did fill a room of 600 persons, so that I needed not sell one single ticket at the door; and, without vanity, the performance was received with a general approbation. . . . I cannot sufficiently express

Strong in new arms, lo! giant Handel stands
Like bold Briareus, with a hundred hands;
To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul, he comes;
And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums,
Arrest him, Empress, or you sleep no more.
She heard, and drove him to the Hibernian shore.

Dunciad, bk. iv.

[1] See a very curious and interesting little book, called *An Account of the Visit of Handel to Dublin*, by Horatio Townsend (Dublin, 1852). Since this book was published, a little additional light has been thrown on the stay of Handel in Ireland, by the publication of the letters of Mrs. Delany, who was then living near Dublin, and who was a friend and ardent admirer of Handel. See, too, Burney's *Hist. of Music*, iv. 661–662.

[2] Mercer's Hospital and the Charitable Infirmary.

[3] He was a Leicestershire country gentleman—a Nonjuror. Townsend, p. 81.

the kind treatment I receive here, but the politeness of this generous nation cannot be unknown to you, so I let you judge of the satisfaction I enjoy, passing my time with honour, profit, and pleasure.' A new series of concerts was performed with equal success, and on April 8, 1742, the 'Messiah' was rehearsed, and on the 13th it was for the first time publicly performed. The choirs of St. Patrick's Cathedral and of Christ's Church were enlisted for the occasion. Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Avolio sang the chief parts. The Viceroy, the Archbishop of Dublin, the leading Fellows of Trinity College, and most of the other dignitaries in Church and State, were present, and the success was overwhelming and immediate. The crowds who thronged the Music Hall were so great that an advertisement was issued begging the ladies for the occasion to discard their hoops, and no discordant voice appears to have broken the unanimity of applause. Handel, whose sensitive nature had been embittered by long neglect and hostility, has recorded in touching terms the completeness of his triumph. He remained in Ireland till the following August, a welcome guest in every circle; and he is said to have expressed his surprise and admiration at the beauty of those national melodies which were then unknown out of Ireland, but which the poetry of Moore has, in our own century, carried over the world.

On his return to London, however, he found the hostility against him but little diminished. The 'Messiah,' when first produced in London, if it did not absolutely fail, was but coldly received, and it is shameful and melancholy to relate that in 1745 Handel was for a second time reduced to bankruptcy. The first really unequivocal success he obtained in England for many years was his 'Judas Maccabæus,' which was composed in 1746, and brought out in the following year. It was dedicated to the Duke of Cumberland, and was intended to commemorate his victory at Culloden, and this fact, as well as the enthusiastic support of the London Jews, who welcomed it as a glorification of a great Jewish hero, contributed largely to its success. From this time the current of fashion suddenly changed. When the 'Messiah' was again produced at Covent Garden in 1750 it was received with general enthusiasm, and the 'Te Deum' on the occasion of the victory of Dettingen, and the long series of

oratorios which Handel brought out in the closing years of his life, were scarcely less successful. In 1751 he became completely blind, but he still continued to compose music and to play publicly upon the organ. Among other pieces he performed his own 'Samson,' and while the choir sang to the pathetic strains of Handel those noble lines in which Milton represented the Jewish hero lamenting the darkness that encompassed him, a thrill of sympathetic emotion passed through the crowded audience as they looked upon the old blind musician, who sat before them at the organ.[1] The popularity of his later days restored his fortunes, and he acquired considerable wealth.[2] He died on Good Friday in 1759, after a residence in England of forty-nine years, and he obtained the well-won honour of a tomb in Westminster Abbey.[3]

The great impulse given by Handel to sacred music, and the naturalisation of the opera in England, are the two capital events in English musical history during the first half of the eighteenth century. Apart from these musical performances the love for dramatic entertainments appears to have greatly increased, though the theatre never altogether recovered the blow it had received during the Puritan ascendancy. So much has been said of the necessary effect of theatrical amusements in demoralising nations that it is worthy of special notice that there were ten or eleven theatres open in London in the reign of Elizabeth, and a still greater number in the reign of her successor,[4] whereas in the incomparably more profligate reign of Charles II. there were only two. Even these proved too many, and in spite of the attraction of actresses, who were then for the first time permitted upon the stage, and of the great histrionic powers of Hart and of Betterton, it was found necessary to unite the companies in 1684.[5] The profligacy of the theatre during the generation that followed the Restoration can hardly be exaggerated, and it continued with little abatement during two reigns. The character of the plays was such that few ladies of

[1] Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, iii. 177.

[2] Ibid. iii. 549-550. He left 20,000*l.*

[3] Schölcher's *Life of Handel*. Burney and Hawkins's *Histories of Music*.

[4] Compare Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, i. 343. Chalmers' *Account of the Early English Stage*.

[5] Cibber's *Apology*, ch. iv.

respectability and position ventured to appear at the first representation of a new comedy, and those whose curiosity triumphed over their delicacy usually came masked—a custom which at this time became very common, and which naturally led to grave abuses.[1] By the time of the Revolution, however, the movement of dissipation had somewhat spent its force, and the appearance in 1698 of Collier's well-known 'Short View of the Stage,' had a sensible and an immediate effect. Though the author was a vehement Nonjuror, William expressed warm approbation of his work, and a Royal order was issued to restrain the abuses of the stage. The Master of the Revels, who then licensed plays, began to exercise his function with some severity, and a favourable change passed over public opinion. In the reign of Anne the reformation was much aided by the prohibition of masks in the theatre.[2] But although a certain improvement was effected, much still remained to be done. Great scandal was caused by a prologue, written by Garth, and spoken at the opening of the Haymarket theatre in 1705, which congratulated the world that the stage was beginning to take the place of the Church.[3] The two Houses of Convocation, in a representation to the Queen in 1711, dwelt strongly on the immorality of the drama.[4] Swift placed its degraded condition among the foremost causes of the corruption of the age,[5] and it

[1] 'While our authors took these extraordinary liberties with their wit, I remember the ladies were then observed to be decently afraid of venturing barefaced to a new comedy till they had been assured they might do it without the risque of insult to their modesty; or if their curiosity were too strong for their patience, they took care at least to save appearances, and rarely came upon the first days of acting but in masks (then daily worn, and admitted in the pit, side boxes, and gallery).' Cibber's *Apology*, ch. viii. So Pope:—

> The fair sat panting at a courtier's play,
> And not a mask went unimproved away.
> *Essay on Criticism*, pt. ii.

[2] See Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 355 (ed. 1780).

[3] In the good days of ghostly ignorance,
How did cathedrals rise and zeal advance!
The merry monks said orisons at ease,
Large were their meals, and light their penances.
Pardons for sins were purchased with estates,
And none but rogues in rags died reprobates.
But now that pious pageantry's no more
And stages thrive as churches did before.

See the *Harleian Miscellany*, ii. 21.

[4] *Harleian Miscellany*, ii. 21.

[5] See some admirable remarks on the subject in his *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, written in 1709. He says: 'It is worth observing the distributive justice of the authors, which is constantly applied to the punishment of virtue and the reward

is remarkable that although English play-writers borrowed very largely from the French, the English stage was far inferior to that of France in decorum, modesty, and morality. In this respect at least there was no disposition to imitate French manners, and we may, indeed, trace among English writers no small jealousy of the dramatic supremacy of France. Dryden continually expressed it, and Shadwell displayed it in a strain of grotesque insolence. Among his plays was one called 'The Miser,' based upon one of the most perfect of the matchless comedies of Molière. Not content with degrading this noble play by the addition of coarse, obscene, and insipid jests which French taste would never have tolerated, Shadwell prefixed to it a preface in which he gives us with amusing candour his own estimate of the comparative merits of Molière and of himself. 'The foundation of this play,' he said, 'I took from one of Moliere's, called "L'Avare," but having too few persons and too little action for an English theatre, I added to both so much that I may call more than half this play my own; and I think I may say without vanity that Molière's part of it has not suffered in my hands; nor did I ever know a French comedy made use of by the worst of our poets that was not bettered by them. 'Tis not barrenness of wit or invention that makes us borrow from the French, but laziness, and this was the occasion of my making use of "L'Avare."[1]

'Shadwell was a poor poet, but he was for a long time a popular dramatist, and he was sufficiently conspicuous to be appointed poet laureate by William in the place of Dryden. The preface I have cited, coming from such a pen, throws a curious light upon the national taste. Addison and Steele, who contributed in so many ways to turn the stream of fashion in the direction of morality, did something at least, to in-

of vice; directly opposite to the rules of their best criticks, as well as to the practice of dramatick poets in all other ages and countries. . . . I do not remember that our English poets ever suffered a criminal amour to succeed upon the stage until the reign of Charles II. Ever since that time the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched, and adultery and fornication are supposed to be committed behind the scenes as part of the action.'

[1] So, too, in the Prologue of the play—

French plays in which true wit's as rarely found
As mines of silver are in English ground.

* * * * *

For our good-natured nation thinks it fit
To count French toys good wares, French nonsense wit.

troduce French decorum into the English drama. Both of them wrote plays, which though of no great merit, had their hour of noisy popularity, and were at least scrupulously moral: 'I never heard of any plays,' said Parson Adams, in one of the novels of Fielding, 'fit for a Christian to read but "Cato" and the "Conscious Lovers," and I must own in the latter there are some things almost solemn enough for a sermon.'[1] The example, however, was not very generally followed, and some of the comedies of Fielding in point of coarseness are little if at all superior to those of Wycherley. Dr. Herring, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, when Court chaplain and preacher at Lincoln's Inn, denounced the 'Beggars' Opera' of Gay with great asperity from the pulpit;[2] and Sir John Bernard, in 1735, brought the condition of the theatre before the House of Commons, complaining bitterly that there were now six theatres in London, and that they were sources of great corruption. In the course of the debate one of his chief supporters observed 'that it was no less surprising than shameful to see so great a change for the worse in the temper and inclinations of the British nation, who were now so extravagantly addicted to lewd and idle diversions that the number of playhouses in London was double that of Paris . . . that it was astonishing to all Europe that Italian eunuchs and signoras should have set salaries equal to those of the Lords of the Treasury and Judges of England.'[3] On this occasion nothing effectual was done, but soon after the theatre took a new form which was well calculated to alarm politicians. Fielding, following an example which had been set by Gay, made it the vehicle of political satire, and in his 'Pasquin' and his 'Historical Register' he ridiculed Walpole and the corruption at elections. Another play, called 'The Golden Rump,' submitted to the director of Lincoln's Inn Theatre and handed over by him to the minister, was said to

[1] Joseph Andrews, book iii. ch. 11. Hallam says, 'Steele's *Conscious Lovers* is the first comedy [after the Restoration] which can be called moral.' *Hist. of Literature*, iv. p. 284. Hazlitt complains of the too didactic character of the plays of Steele, and says, 'The comedies of Steele were the first that were written expressly with a view not to imitate the manners but to reform the morals of the age.'—*Lectures on the Comic Writers*, p. 341.

[2] Swift's *Correspondence*, ii. 243. *Intelligencer*, No. III.

[3] *Parl. Hist.* ix. 948.

have contained a bitter satire against the King and the reigning family. Walpole, relying on these, carried through Parliament in 1737 his Licensing Act, diminishing the number of playhouses, and at the same time authorising the Lord Chamberlain to prohibit any dramatic representation, and providing that no new play or addition to an old play could be acted if he had not first inspected it. The power of the Lord Chamberlain over the theatre was not a new thing, and it had very recently been exercised for the suppression of the sequel to the 'Beggars' Opera' by Gay; but it had hitherto been undefined or very rarely employed, and the institution of an authorised and systematic censorship was opposed by Pulteney, and denounced with especial vehemence by Chesterfield, as the beginning of a crusade against the liberty of the press. Among the plays that were proscribed under the new system were the 'Gustavus Vasa' of Brooke, and the 'Eleanora' of Thomson; the rising fashion of political comedies was crushed, but in general the licensing power was employed with much moderation and simply in the interests of morality.[1]

By far the greatest dramatic success during the first half of the eighteenth century was the 'Beggars' Opera' of Gay. It, for a time, as we have seen, ruined the Italian opera; and in one of the notes to the 'Dunciad' we have a curious picture of the enthusiasm it excited. It was acted in London without interruption for sixty-three days, and was received with equal applause in the following season. It was played fifty times in both Bristol and Bath. It spread rapidly through all the great towns of the kingdom, penetrated to Scotland and Wales, and was brilliantly successful in Ireland. Its favourite songs appeared on ladies' fans and on drawing-room screens, and a hitherto obscure actress, by playing its principal part, became one of the most conspicuous and popular personages in the country. In general the prevailing taste in dramatic literature during the greater part of this period was very low. The great change which had passed over the

[1] A very full history of Walpole's measure is given in Coxe's *Life*, ch. xlvii. It was ostensibly an Act to amend a law passed under Anne which treated players who acted without licence as vagrants or vagabonds. See, too, Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, *Parl. Debates*.

social position of authors was peculiarly prejudicial to the drama, which consists in a great degree of sketches of the manners of society,[1] and there was little or no demand for plays of a high order. Slight and coarse comedies, or gaudy spectacles with rope dancers and ballets, appear to have been in the greatest favour, and in more serious pieces the love of butchering, so characteristic of the English stage, was long a standing reproach among foreign critics.[2] Masquerades were at this time extremely popular, and they had a considerable influence over theatrical taste. Heidegger organised them on a magnificent scale, and they were warmly patronised by the King, who was extremely angry with Bishop Gibson for denouncing them. In one celebrated masquerade the King was present in disguise, while the well-known maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, scandalised all decent persons by appearing almost naked as Iphigenia.[3] In 1755, after the earthquake of Lisbon, they were for a short time suppressed, lest they should call down a similar judgment upon London.[4] The English form of pantomime, which is nearly related to this type of amusement, and which, after more than 150 years retains its popularity, was invented by Rich in 1717.[5] For a few years after the Restoration the acting of Hart[6] and Betterton in some degree supported Shakespeare upon the stage, but a change had taken place in the taste and in the manners of the nation, which made his plays appear barbarous or insipid. Even Dryden, who defended him, only ventured with some timidity to pronounce him to be equal, if not superior to Ben Jonson;[6] and the depreciating or contemptuous language which Pepys employed about nearly every Shakespearian play[7] that he witnessed probably reflected very fairly

[1] As Horace Walpole said: 'Why are there so few genteel comedies but because most comedies are written by men not of that sphere? Etheridge, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Cibber wrote genteel comedy because they lived in the best company; and Mrs. Oldfield played it so well because she not only followed but often set the fashion.'—*To the Countess of Ossory*, June 14, 1787.

[2] *Tatler*, No. 134. *Spectator*, No. 44.

[3] Walpole's *Letters to Mann*. May, 1749.

[4] Walpole's *Mem. of George II.*, iii. p. 98. Bedford ascribed the great storm of 1703 to the iniquities of the stage.—*Bedford on the Stage*, p. 26.

[5] Davies' *Life of Garrick*, i. 92–93. Cibber's *Apology*, ch. xv.

[6] Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*.

[7] He calls *Midsummer Night's Dream* 'the most insipid, ridiculous play' he ever saw; the *Taming of the Shrew* 'a silly play;' *Othello* (which he appears at first to have liked), 'a mean thing;' *Henry VIII.* 'a simple thing made up of many patches,'

the sentiments of the average playgoer. Many of the greatest plays were soon completely banished from the stage, and the few which retained any popularity were re-written, printed under other names, or at least largely altered, reduced to a French standard of correctness, or enlivened with music and dancing. Thus 'Romeo and Juliet' was superseded by the 'Caius Marius' of Otway, 'Measure for Measure' by the 'Law against Lovers' of Davenant, the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' by Dennis's 'Comical Gallant,' 'Richard II.' by Tate's 'Sicilian Tyrant,' 'Cymbeline' by Durfey's 'Injured Princess,' 'The Merchant of Venice' by Lord Lansdowne's 'Jew of Venice.' 'Macbeth' was re-cast by Davenant, 'Richard III.' by Cibber, 'The Tempest' by both Davenant and Shadwell, 'Coriolanus' by Dennis, and 'King Lear' by Tate.[1]

The revolution of taste which gradually reinstated in his ascendancy the greatest writer of England, and perhaps of the world, and made his ideas and language familiar to the upper and middle classes of the nation, is certainly not less worthy of commemoration than any of the military or political incidents of the time. Its effect in educating the English mind can hardly be overrated, and its moral influence was very great. It was partly literary and partly dramatic. The first critical edition of Shakespeare was that of Rowe, which was published in 1709; and, before half the century had passed, it was followed by those of Pope, Theobald, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and Warburton. Dr. Johnson has noticed as a proof of the paucity of readers in the seventeenth century 'that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of Shakespeare, which probably did not together make 1,000 copies.'[2] By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, there had been thirteen editions, and of these, nine had appeared within the last forty years.[3] It is obvious from this fact that the interest in Shakespeare was steadily increasing, and that the critical study of his plays was becoming

with nothing good in it 'besides the shows and processions.' *Macbeth* he acknowledged was 'a pretty good play.'

[1] Malone's *Historical Account of the English Stage.*

[2] *Life of Milton.*

[3] Knight's *Studies of Shakespeare*, p. 141. See, too, Miller's *Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*, iii. 48–49, 296–297.

an important department of English literature; and he slowly reappeared in his unaltered form upon the stage. The merit of this revival has often been ascribed almost exclusively to Garrick, but in truth it had begun before, and was a natural reflection of the movement in literature. Six or seven years before the appearance of Garrick, some ladies of rank formed a 'Shakespearian Club' for the purpose of supporting by their presence or encouragement the best plays of Shakespeare.[1] Soon after revivals became both frequent and successful. In 1737 'King John' was revived at Covent Garden for the first time since the downfall of the stage. In 1738 the second part of 'Henry IV.,' 'Henry V.,' and the first part of 'Henry VI.,' no one of which had been acted for forty or fifty years, were brought upon the stage. In 1740 'As You Like It' was reproduced after an eclipse of forty years, and had a considerable run. In February 1741 the 'Merchant of Venice' was produced in its original form for the first time after one hundred years, and Macklin excited the most enthusiastic applause by his representation of Shylock, who in Lord Lansdowne's version of the play had been reduced to insignificant proportions.[2] In the same year the 'Winter's Tale' was revived after one hundred years, and 'All's Well that Ends Well' for the first time since the death of Shakespeare; and a monument of the great poet was erected in Westminster Abbey, paid for by the proceeds of special representations at the two great theatres.[3] In the October of this year Garrick appeared for the first time on the London stage in the character of Richard III.[4]

The effects of the talent of a great actor are necessarily so extremely evanescent that it is impossible to compare with much confidence the merits of those who have long passed away. When, however, we consider the extraordinary versatility of the acting of Garrick, and the extraordinary impression which during a long series of years it made upon the most cultivated,

[1] Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. p. 224.

[2] See an interesting account of this great triumph in Kirkman's *Life of Macklin*, ii. 253-265.

[3] *Mrs. Delany's Life*, ii. 139. Pope wrote—

After one hundred and thirty years' nap
Enter Shakespeare with a loud clap.

[4] Malone's *Historical Account of the English Stage*, 292-294. The interval that had elapsed since the former acting of each of these plays is given by Malone on the authority of the advertisements, which may not always have been absolutely correct.

as well as upon the most illiterate, it will appear probable that he has never been surpassed in his art—it is certain that he had never been equalled in England since the death of Betterton.[1] The grandson of one of those refugees who had been expelled from France upon the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he is another of the many instances of the benefits which England has indirectly derived from the intolerance of her neighbours; and in two respects his appearance on the stage has a real importance in the history of the English mind. He was before all things a Shakespearian actor, and he did more than any other single man to extend the popularity and increase the reputation of the great dramatist. He usually gave seventeen or eighteen plays of Shakespeare in a year.[2] He brought out their beauties with all the skill of a consummate artist, and he at the same time produced a revolution in the art of acting very similar to that which Kent had effected in the art of gardening. A habit of slow, monotonous declamation, of unnatural pomp, and of a total disregard for historic truth in theatrical costume, had become general on the English stage, and the various and rapid intonations of Garrick, the careful and constant study of nature and of history, which he displayed both in his acting and his accessories, had all the effect of novelty.[3] It is worthy of notice that a similar change both in

[1] The impression Betterton made in his day seems to have been not at all less than that made by Garrick. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and Steele took occasion of his funeral to devote an admirable paper in the *Tatler* to his acting. See, too, Cibber's *Apology*. Cibber pronounced him as supreme among actors as Shakespeare among poets. A few other particulars relating to him will be found in Galt's *Lives of the Players*. Pope thought Betterton the greatest actor, but said that some old people spoke of Hart as his superior. Betterton died in 1710. Spence's *Anecdotes*.

[2] Davies' *Life of Garrick*, i. 114.

[3] See the preliminary dissertation to Foote's *Works*, i. pp. lii., liii. Macklin, who had quarrelled with Garrick and who cordially detested him, described his acting as 'all bustle.' Macklin's *Memoirs*, i. 248. Fielding's witty description is well known. 'He the best player!' cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, 'why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a ghost I should have looked in the very same manner and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, when you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me! any man—that is, any good man—that has such a mother would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me, but indeed, Madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and, the King for my money! he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor.'—*Tom Jones*. See, too, *The World*, No. 6.

gardening and in acting took place in France a generation later, and was in a great degree due to the love of nature and the revolt against conventional forms, resulting from the writings of Rousseau. Garrick, like all innovators, had to encounter at first much opposition. Pope and Fielding were warmly in his favour, but the poet Gray declared himself 'stiff in opposition.' Horace Walpole professed himself unable to see the merit of the new performer. Cibber, who had been brought up in the school of Betterton, was equally contemptuous, and the leading actors took the same side. Macklin always spoke of him with the greatest bitterness. Quin, who had for some time held the foremost rank in tragedy, and whose ready wit made him a specially formidable opponent, said, 'If the young fellow is right, I and the rest of the players have been all wrong;' and he added, 'Garrick is a new religion—Whitefield was followed for a time—but they will all come to church again.' Garrick answered in a happy epigram to the effect 'that it was not heresy but reformation.' In two or three characters Quin is said to have equalled him. The Othello of Garrick was a comparative failure, which was attributed to the dark colouring that concealed the wonderful play of his features,[1] and Barry, owing to his rare personal advantages, was, in the opinion of many, superior as Romeo,[2] but on the whole the supremacy of Garrick was in a few months indisputable, and it continued unshaken during his whole career. At the same time his excellent character, his brilliant qualities, both as a writer and a talker, and the very considerable fortune that he speedily amassed, gave him a social position which had, probably, been attained by no previous actor. The calling of an actor had been degraded by ecclesiastical tradition, as well as by the gross immorality of the theatre of the Restoration. For some time, however, it had been steadily rising,[3] and Garrick, while elevating incalculably the standard of theatrical taste, contributed also not a little to free his profession from the discredit under which it laboured. From the time of his first appearance upon the stage till the close of the careers of Kemble, of the elder Kean, and of Miss O'Neil, the

[1] Nichols' *Life of Hogarth*, pp. 191, 192.

[2] Mrs. Montagu's *Letters*, iii. 107.

[3] Some particulars of the increase of actors' salaries will be found in Kirkman's *Life of Macklin*, i. 435. Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 239–242.

English stage was never without some actors who might rank with the greatest on the Continent.

The old Puritanical and ecclesiastical hatred of the theatre had abated, but it was still occasionally shown. In Scotland it completely triumphed, and the attempts of Allan Ramsay and a few others to promote dramatic taste were almost completely abortive.[1] In England, Collier not only censured the gross indecency and immorality of the stage with just severity, but he also contended that it was profane to employ any form of words which was ultimately derived from the Bible, even though it had long since passed into general usage, to use the word 'martyr' in any but its religious sense, to reflect, however slightly, on any priest, not only of a Christian but even of a Pagan creed. In 1719 Arthur Bedford, a chaplain to the Duke of Bedford, published a most curious work 'Against the horrid Blasphemies and Impieties which are still used in English Playhouses . . . . showing their plain tendency to overthrow all piety, and advance the interest and honour of the devil in the world; from almost 7,000 instances taken out of the plays of the present century.' He analysed with extraordinary minuteness the whole dramatic literature of the time, and declares that it offended against no less than 1,400 texts of the Bible. He accuses the playwriters, among other things, of restoring the Pagan worship by invoking or giving Divine titles to Cupid, Jupiter, Venus, Pluto, and Diana; of indirectly encouraging witchcraft or magic, 'for by bewitching, magick, and enchanting, they only signify something which is most pleasant and desirable;' of encouraging it directly and in the most blasphemous manner by such plays as 'Macbeth' or the 'Tempest.'[2] Like Collier, he finds it very criminal to place an immoral sentiment in the mouth of

[1] Burton's *Hist. of Scotland from the Revolution*, ii. 561. James I., before he ascended the English throne, had come into violent collision with the Puritan ministers, because he tried to procure actors toleration in Scotland.—Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, i. pp. 344–6.

[2] See the long and curious criticism on Macbeth. Two passages may be cited as specimens of this singular book. 'When God was pleased to vindicate His own honour, and show that He would not be thus affronted, by sending a most dreadful storm. . . . yet, so great was the obstinacy of the stage under such signal judgments, that we are told the actors did in a few days after entertain again their audience with the ridiculous plays of the *Tempest* and *Macbeth*, and that at the mention

an immoral character, or a Pagan sentiment in the mouth of a Pagan speaker; and he was able to discover blasphemy even in the 'Cato' of Addison.[1] About thirty years later, William Law published his well-known treatise 'On the Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage,' in which he maintained that 'the business of players is the most wicked and detestable profession in the world'; 'that the playhouse, not only when some very profane play is on the stage, but in its daily, common entertainments, is as certainly the house of the devil as the church is the house of God;' and that in going to the theatre 'you are as certainly going to the devil's triumph as if you were going to those old sports where people committed murder and offered Christians to be devoured by wild beasts.' In 1769, during the Shakespeare Jubilee, when Garrick was acting at Stratford-on-Avon, the populace of that town are said to have regarded him as a magician, and to have attributed to the vengeance of Heaven the heavy rains that fell during the festival.[2] But, on the whole, the religious prejudice against the theatre in the first sixty years of the eighteenth century was probably much less strong than it afterwards became, through the influence of the Methodists and the Evangelicals. The strength which it at last acquired among large classes is much to be regretted. It has prevented an amusement which has added largely to the sum of human happiness, and which exercises a very considerable educational influence, from spread-

of the chimneys being blown down the audience were pleased to clap at an unusual length . . . as if they would outbrave the judgment, throw Providence out of the chair, place the devil in His stead, and provoke God once more to plead His own cause by sending a greater calamity' (p. 26). 'In another play . . . the high-priest sings—

> By the spirit in this wand,
> Which the silver moon commands,
> By the powerful God of Night,
> By the love of Amphitrite.

(By the mystery of Thy holy incarnation (which was to destroy the works of the devil); by Thy holy nativity and circumcision; by Thy baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Thine agony and bloody sweat; by Thy cross and passion; by Thy precious death and burial; by Thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us from such impieties as these!)' (p. 16).

[1] 'Our blessed Saviour . . . hath these words: "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Upon the stage, an actor, finding that his mistress loves him, saith—

> This, this is life indeed! Life worth preserving!
> Such life as Juba never felt till now!

And a little after—

> My joy! My best beloved! My only wish!'
> (p. 244.)

[2] Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 226–227.

ing anywhere except in the greatest centres of population. It has multiplied proportionately amusements of a far more frivolous and purely unintellectual character, and it has withdrawn from the audiences in the theatre the very classes whose presence would be the best guarantee of the habitual morality of the entertainment.

The decline of one other class of amusements must be briefly noticed, for it forms a curious page in the history of national manners. Up to the time of the Rebellion the baiting of animals, and especially of bulls and bears, was a favourite pastime with every class. Henry VIII., Mary, Elizabeth, and James I. had all encouraged it; but under Elizabeth the growing taste for theatrical representations had begun gradually to displace it, and to give a new ply and tone to the manners of the rich. All forms of amusement naturally fell into desuetude during the Civil War. All of them were suppressed during the Commonwealth, and it was probably some Puritan divines who first maintained in England the doctrine that it was criminal to make the combative or ferocious instincts of animals subservient to our pleasures.[1] Motives of humanity had, however, in general little or nothing to say to the Puritanical proscription of these amusements, which, as Macaulay truly said, were condemned not because they gave pain to the animal, but because they gave pleasure to the spectators.[2] When, however, they revived at the Restoration, the change of tastes that had taken place became apparent. The bear-garden was as popular as ever with the poor, but the upper classes had begun to desert it. In 1675 we find a Court exhibition before the Spanish Ambassador, and in 1681 the Ambassador of Morocco and the Duke of Albemarle witnessed a similar spectacle; but such entertainments were now becoming rare. Pepys and Evelyn speak of them as 'rude and nasty pleasures,' 'butcherly sports, or rather barbarous cruelties';[3] and, although even in the last years of the seventeenth century we find a writer on

[1] See a very curious collection of Puritan denunciations of cock-fighting, on the ground that 'the antipathy and cruelty that one beast showeth to another is the fruit of our rebellion against God,' in the *Harleian Miscellany*, vi. 125–127.

[2] See Macaulay's account, *Hist.* ch. 2, and the famous bear-baiting scene in *Hudibras*.

[3] Pepys' *Diary*, Aug. 14, 1666. Evelyn's *Diary*, June 16, 1670.

this subject asserting that bullbaiting 'is a sport the English much delight in, and not only the baser sort but the greatest lords and ladies,'[1] it is clear that the stream of fashion had decidedly turned. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the essay-writers who exercised so great an influence on the minor morals of society, steadily discountenanced these amusements; and we may at this period find several slight, but clear traces of a warmer regard for the sufferings of the lower animals. Steele speaks of the bear-garden as a place 'where reason and good manners had no right to enter,' and both he and Pope wrote in the strongest terms against cruelty to animals, and especially against the English passion for brutal amusements.[2]

The practice of vivisection, which is at all times liable to grave abuse, and which, before the introduction of anæsthetics, was often inexpressibly horrible, appears to have been very common.[3] Bacon had recommended inquirers to turn their attention in this direction; and the great discovery, partly through its means, of the circulation of the blood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had brought it into fashion; but Pope spoke of it with extreme detestation,[4] and Johnson, several years later, dwelt with just indignation upon the useless barbarities of which some medical students were guilty.[5] The

[1] John Houghton's 'Collections for the Improvement of Agriculture' (1694), quoted in Malcolm's *Anecdotes of London*, iii. 57. As late as 1749, Chetwood, in his *History of the Stage*, says, 'Bull-baiting, boxing, bear-gardens, and prize fighting will draw to them all ranks of people from the peer to the pedlar' (p. 60). They had, however, at this time quite passed out of the category of recognised fashionable amusements.

[2] *Spectator*, No. 141. *Tatler*, No. 134. *Guardian*, No. 61 (by Pope). See, too, the *World*, No. 190.

[3] See, on the vivisection of dogs, Coventry's *Pompey the Little*, part iii. ch. xi. The author adds: 'A dog might have been the emblematic animal of Æsculapius or Apollo with as much propriety as he was of Mercury; for no creatures, I believe, have been of more eminent service to the healing tribe than dogs. Incredible is the number of these animals which have been sacrificed at the shrines of physic and surgery. Lectures of anatomy subsist by their destruction. Ward (says Pope) tried his drops on puppies and the poor; and in general, all new medicines and experiments of a doubtful nature are sure to be made in the first place on the bodies of those unfortunate animals.' Swift, in one of his *Drapier's Letters*, compares the threats and complaints of Wood 'to the last howls of a dog dissected alive, as I hope he hath sufficiently been.'—Letter 4.

[4] Spence's *Anecdotes*, sec. viii.

[5] 'Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation or with

poems of Gay are animated by a remarkable feeling of compassion for animals,[1] and the Duke of Montague is said to have established a home for them, and to have exerted his influence as a great landlord warmly in their favour.[2]

At the same time the change was only in a small section of the community. Bear-baiting, when it ceased to be an amusement of the rich, speedily declined because of the scarcity of the animals, but bull-baiting through the whole of the eighteenth century was a popular English amusement. In Queen Anne's time it was performed in London at Hockley Hole, regularly twice a week,[3] and there was no provincial town to which it did not extend. It was regarded on the Continent as peculiarly English. The tenacity of the English bull-dog, which would sometimes suffer itself to be cut to pieces rather than relax its hold, was a favourite subject of national boasting, while French writers pointed to the marked difference in this respect between the French and English taste as a conclusive proof of the higher civilisation of their own nation.[4] Among those who at a late period patronised or defended bull-baiting were Windham and Parr; and even Canning and Peel opposed the measure for its abolition by law. At Stamford and at Tutbury a maddened bull was, from a very early period, annually hunted through the streets. Among the entertainments advertised in London in 1729 and 1730, we find 'a mad bull to be dressed up with fire-

the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth or injected into the veins.'—*The Idler* (No. 17), 1758.

[1] See especially his poem on field sports.

[2] Spence's *Anecdotes*, Supplement.

[3] Experienced men, inured to city ways,
Need not the calendar to count their days.
When through the town, with slow and solemn air,
Led by the nostril, walks the muzzled bear,
Behind him moves, majestically dull,
The pride of Hockley Hole, the surly bull.
Learn hence the periods of the week to name,
Monday and Thursday are the days of game.
Gay's *Trivia*.

[4] *Tatler*, No. 134. *Guardian*, No. 61. 'The bear-garden,' says Lord Kames, 'which is one of the chief entertainments of the English, is held in abhorrence by the French and other polite nations.'—*Essays on Morality* (1st ed.), p. 7. Hogarth introduced into his picture of a cock-fight, a Frenchman turning away with an expression of unqualified disgust.

works and turned loose in the game place, a dog to be dressed up with fireworks over him, a bear to be let loose at the same time, and a cat to be tied to the bull's tail, a mad bull dressed up with fireworks to be baited.'[1] Such amusements were mingled with prize-fighting, boxing matches between women, or combats with quarter-staffs or broadswords. Ducking ponds, in which ducks were hunted by dogs, were favourite popular resorts around London, especially those in St. George's Fields, the present site of Bethlehem Hospital. Sometimes the amusement was varied, and an owl was tied to the back of the duck, which dived in terror till one or both birds were killed. The very barbarous amusement of cock-throwing, which was at least as old as Chaucer, and in which Sir T. More when a young man had been especially expert, is said to have been peculiarly English.[2] It consisted of tying a cock to a stake as a mark for sticks, which were thrown at it from a distance till it was killed; and it was ascribed to the English antipathy to the French, who were symbolised by that bird.[3] The old Greek game of cock-fighting was also extremely popular in England. It was a favourite game of schoolboys, who, from the time of Henry II. till the latter part of the eighteenth century, were accustomed almost universally to practise it on Shrove Tuesday; and in many schools in Scotland the runaway cocks were claimed by the masters as their perquisites. A curious account is preserved of the parish of Applecross in Ross-shire, written about 1790, in which among the different sources of the schoolmaster's income we find 'cock-fight dues, which are equal to one quarter's payment for each scholar.'[4] Henry VIII. built a cock-pit at Whitehall; and James I. was accustomed to divert himself with cock-fighting twice a week. In the eighteenth century it appears to have rather increased than diminished, and being the occasion of great gambling it

[1] Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 60. Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 259.

[2] There is, however, a picture representing a Dutch fair, in the gallery at the Hague, where a goose is represented undergoing a similar fate.

[3] See, on these sports, Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the English People*. Collier's *Hist. of the Drama*. Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*. Chambers's *Book of Days*, Hone's *Everyday Book*, Milson's *Travels in England*, Muralt's *Letters on England*. One famous bear, called Sacherson, is immortalised by Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act 1, scene 1.

[4] Chambers's *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, iii. 269.

retained its place among very fashionable amusements; nor does it appear to have been generally regarded as more inhuman than hunting, coursing, or shooting. It was introduced into Scotland at the close of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century by a fencing master named Machrie, who seems to have been looked upon as a benefactor to Scotland for having started a new, cheap, and innocent amusement. He wrote, in 1705, 'An Essay on the Innocent and Royal Recreation and Art of Cocking,' in which he expressed his hope that 'in cock-war village may be engaged against village, city against city, kingdom against kingdom, nay, the father against the son, until all the wars of Europe, wherein so much innocent Christian blood is spilt, be turned into the innocent pastime of cocking.'[1] The fiercest and most powerful cocks were frequently brought over from Germany; and the Welsh main, which was the most sanguinary form of the amusement, appears to have been exclusively English, and of modern origin. In this game as many as sixteen cocks were sometimes matched against each other at each side, and they fought till all on one side were killed. The victors were then divided and fought, and the process was repeated till but a single cock remained. County engaged county in cocking matches, and the church bells are said to have been sometimes rung in honour of the victor in the Welsh main.[2]

The passion for inland watering-places was at its height. Bath, under the long rule of Beau Nash, fully maintained its old ascendancy, and is said to have been annually visited by more than 8,000 families. Anstey, in one of the most brilliant satirical poems of the eighteenth century, painted, with inimitable skill, its follies and its tastes; and the arbitrary but not unskilful sway and self-important manners, of its great master of the ceremonies, were widely celebrated in verse and

[1] Chambers's *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, 267–8.

[2] Roberts's *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, p. 421. The history of cock-fighting and cock-throwing has been fully examined in a dissertation by Pegge, in the *Archæologia*, vol. iii.; in Beckmann's *Hist. of Inventions*, vol. ii.; and in Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*. See, too, Macky's *Tour through England*, vol. i. p. 137; Heath's account of the Scilly Islands, *Pinkerton's Voyages*, ii. 756. Wesley tells a story of a gentleman whom he reproved for swearing, and who was at last so mollified that he said 'he would come to hear him, only he was afraid he should say something against fighting of cocks.'—Wesley's *Journal*, March 1743.

prose. Among the commands which he issued there is one which is well worthy of a passing notice. Between 1720 and 1730 it was observed that young men of fashion in London had begun in their morning walks to lay aside their swords, which were hitherto looked upon as the indispensable signs of a gentleman, and to carry walking-sticks instead. Beau Nash made a great step in the same direction by absolutely prohibiting swords within his dominions, and this was, perhaps, the beginning of a change of fashion which appears to have been general about 1780, and which has a real historical importance as reflecting and sustaining the pacific habits that were growing in society.[1] In addition to Bath, Tunbridge Wells, Epsom, Buxton, and the more modest Islington retained their popularity, and a new rival was rising into note. The mineral springs of Cheltenham were discovered about 1730, and in 1738 a regular Spa was built. But soon after the middle of the century a great and sudden change took place. Up to this time there is scarcely a record of sea-bathing in England, but in 1750 Dr. Richard Russell published in Latin his treatise 'On glandular consumption, and the use of sea-water in diseases of the glands.' It was translated in 1753. The new remedy acquired an extraordinary popularity, and it produced a great, permanent, and on the whole very beneficial change in the national tastes. In a few years obscure fishing-villages along the coast began to assume the dimensions of stately watering-places, and before the century had closed Cowper described, in indignant lines, the common enthusiasm with which all ages and classes rushed for health or pleasure to the sea.[2]

[1] See a curious passage from 'The Universal Spectator,' of 1730, quoted in the *Pictorial Hist. of England*, iv. 805. *Beau Nash's Life*, by Doran. Doran's article on Beau Nash, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Townsend's *Hist. of the House of Commons*, ii. p. 412–416. The evils resulting from the prevailing fashion of wearing swords, had been noticed in the beginning of the century in a treatise on the subject by a writer named Povey.

[2] Your prudent grandmammas, ye modern belles,
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,
When health required it, would consent to roam,
Else more attached to pleasures found at home;
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingenious to diversify dull life,
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
And all, impatient of dry land, agree
With one consent to rush into the sea. *Retirement.*

There was not, I think, any other change in the history of manners during the first sixty years of the eighteenth century, so considerable as to call for extended notice in a work like the present. The refinements of civilisation advanced by slow and almost insensible degrees into country life as the improvements of roads increased the facilities of locomotion, and as the growth of provincial towns and of a provincial press multiplied the centres of intellectual and political activity. In these respects, however, the latter half of the century was a far more memorable period than the former half; and the history of roads, which I have not yet noticed, will be more conveniently considered in a future chapter. The manners and tastes of the country gentry were often to the last degree coarse and illiterate, but the large amount of public business that in England has always been thrown upon the class, maintained among them no contemptible level of practical intelligence; and some circulation of intellectual life was secured by the cathedral towns, the inland watering-places, and the periodical migrations of the richer members to London or Bath. The yeomanry class, also, as long as they existed in considerable numbers, maintained a spirit of independence in country life which extended even to the meanest ploughman, and had some influence both in stimulating the faculties, and restraining the despotism of the country magistrates.[1] Whatever may have been the defects of the English country gentry, agriculture under their direction had certainly attained a much higher perfection than in France,[2] and though narrow-minded and intensely prejudiced, they formed an upright, energetic, and patriotic element in English public life. The well-known pictures of Sir Roger de Coverley and of Squire Western exhibit in strong lights their merits and their faults, and the contrast between rural and metropolitan manners was long one of the favourite subjects of the essayists. That contrast, however, was rapidly diminishing. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the habit of making annual visits to London or to a watering-place very greatly increased, and it

[1] Defoe has noticed this independence in lines more remarkable for their meaning than for their form.

The meanest English plowman studies law,
And keeps thereby the magistrates in awe.

'Will boldly tell them what they ought to do,
And sometimes punish their omissions too.
True-born Englishman.

[2] See the comparison in Arthur Young's *Tour in France.*

contributed at once to soften the manners of the richer and to accelerate the disappearance of the poorer members of the class. A scale and rivalry of luxury passed into country life which made the position of the small landlord completely untenable. At the beginning of the century there still existed in England numerous landowners with estates of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year. The descendants in many cases of the ancient yeomen, they ranked socially with the gentry. They possessed to the full extent the pride and prejudices, and discharged very efficiently many of the duties of the class; but they lived exclusively in the country, their whole lives were occupied with country business or country sports, their travels rarely or never extended beyond the nearest county town, and in tastes, in knowledge, and in language they scarcely differed from the tenant-farmer. From the early years of the eighteenth century this class began rapidly to diminish, and before the close of the century it was almost extinct.[1] Though still vehement Tories, full of zeal for the Church and of hatred of Dissenters and foreigners, the Jacobitism of the country gentry had subsided during the reign of George II., and they gave the Pretender no assistance in 1745. Their chief vice was hard-drinking.[2] Their favourite occupations were field sports. These amusements, though they somewhat changed their character, do not appear to have at all diminished during the first half of the eighteenth century, and it was in this period that Gay, and especially Somer-

[1] This change is well noticed in a very able book published in 1772. The author says: 'An income of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year in the last age was reckoned a decent hereditary patrimony, or a good establishment for life; but now . . all country gentlemen give in to so many local expenses, and reckon themselves so much on a par, that a small estate is but another word for starving; of course, few are to be found, but they are bought up by greater neighbours or become mere farmers.'—*Letters on England*, p. 229. In Grose's *Olio*, published in 1792, there is a very graphic description of the mode of living of 'the little independent country gentleman of 300*l.* per annum,' 'a character,' the author says, 'now worn out and gone.'

[2] Mrs. Montagu, in one of her letters from Yorkshire to a friend in London, writes: 'We have not been troubled with any visitors since Mr. Montagu went away; and could you see how awkward, how absurd, how uncouth are the generality of people in this country, you would look upon this as no small piece of good fortune. For the most part they are drunken and vicious, and worse than hypocrites—profligates. I am very happy that drinking is not within our walls. We have not had one person disordered with liquor since we came down, though most of the poor ladies in the neighbourhood have had more hogs in their drawing-room than ever they had in their hog sty.'—Doran's *Life of Mrs. Montagu*, p. 36.

ville, published the most considerable sporting poems in the language. Hawking, which had been extremely popular in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and which was a favourite sport of Charles II., almost disappeared in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Stag-hunting declined with the spread of agriculture, but hare-hunting held its ground, and fox-hunting greatly increased. Cricket, which would occupy a distinguished place in any modern picture of English manners, had apparently but just arisen. The earliest notice of it, discovered by an antiquary who has devoted much research to the history of amusements, is in one of D'Urfey's songs, written in the beginning of the century.[1] It was mentioned as one of the amusements of Londoners by Strype in his edition of Stow's 'Survey' published in 1720, and towards the close of the century it greatly increased.

There had been loud complaints ever since the Revolution, both in the country and in the towns, of the rapid rise of the poor-rates, but it seems to have been due, much less to any growth of real poverty than to improvident administration and to the dissipated habits that were generated by the poor-laws. Although the controversy on the subject of these laws did not come to a climax till long after the period we are now considering, the great moral and economical evils resulting from them were clearly seen by the most acute thinkers. Among others, Locke, in a report which he drew up in 1697, anticipating something of the later reasoning of Malthus, pointed out forcibly the danger to the country from the great increase of able-bodied pauperism, and attributed it mainly, if not exclusively, to 'the relaxation of discipline and the corruption of manners.' The annual rates in the last thirty years of the seventeenth century were variously estimated at from 600,000*l.* to 840,000*l.* They rose before the end of the reign of Anne to at least a million. They again sank for a time after an Act, which was carried in 1723, for founding workhouses and imposing a more severe discipline on paupers, but they soon regained their ascending movement and continued steadily to increase during the remainder of the century. Popular education and the rapid growth of manufacturing wages had not yet produced that high type of capacity and

[1] Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 106.

knowledge which is now found among the skilled artisans of the great towns, but the broad lines of the English industrial character were clearly discernible. Probably no workman in Europe could equal the Englishman in physical strength, in sustained power and energy of work, and few, if any, could surpass him in thoroughness and fidelity in the performance of his task and in general rectitude and honesty of character. On the other hand, he was far inferior to most Continental workmen in those branches of labour which depended on taste and on delicacy of touch, and most industries of this kind passed into the hands of refugees. His requirements were much greater than those of the Continental workman. In habits of providence and of economy he ranked extremely low in the industrial scale; his relaxations usually took the form of drunkenness or brutal sports, and he was rather peculiarly addicted to riot and violence. An attempt to estimate with any precision the position of the different classes engaged in agriculture or manufacturing industry is very difficult, not only on account of the paucity of evidence we possess, but also on account of the many different and fluctuating elements that have to be considered. The prosperity of a class is a relative term, and we must judge it not only by comparing the condition of the same class in different countries and in different times, but also by comparing it with that of the other sections of society. The value of money has greatly changed,[1] but the change has not been uniform; it has been counteracted by other influences; it applies much more to some articles of consumption than to others, and therefore affects very unequally the different classes in the community. Thus the price of wheat in the seventy years that followed the Revolution was not very materially different from what it now is, and during the first half of the eighteenth century it, on the

[1] It is worthy of notice that the complaints of the increasing price of living in the first half of the eighteenth century, were, among the upper classes, little less loud than those we hear in the present day. Thus the author of *Faction Detected by the Evidence of Facts*, which was published in 1743, speaking of the royal income at different periods of English history, says, 'King William and Queen Anne had but 700,000*l.* per annum, but neither had any family to provide for, and both lived in times when that income would have supported a greater expense than a million would now do; for the truth of which I appeal to the experience of every private family, and to the known advance of price in all commodities and articles of expense whatsoever' (p. 137).

whole, slightly declined. At the time of the Revolution it was a little under 41*s.* a quarter. During the ten years ending in 1705 it was about 43*s.*, in the ten ending in 1715 it was about 44*s.*; in the twenty ending in 1735 about 35*s.*; in the ten ending in 1745 about 32*s.*; and in the ten ending in 1755 about 33*s.* The price of meat, on the other hand, was far less than at present. The average price of mutton throughout England from 1706 to 1730 is stated to have been 2½*d.* a pound. From 1730 to 1760 it had risen to 3*d.* a pound. The price of beef, from 1740 to 1760, is said to have been 2½*d.* a pound. Pork, veal, and lamb, as well as beer, were proportionately cheap.[1] We must remember, too, in estimating the condition of British labourers, that besides their wages they had the advantage of an immense extent of common land. Nearly every village had still around it a large space of unenclosed and uncultivated ground on which the cows, sheep, and geese of the poor found an ample pasture.

The different parts of England differed widely in prosperity, the counties surrounding London, and generally the southern half of the island, being by far the most flourishing, while the northern parts, and especially the counties bordering on Scotland, were the most poor. There can be no doubt that in the former, at least, the condition of the English labourer was much more prosperous than that which was general in the same class on the Continent. Gregory King, in his very valuable estimate of 'the state and condition of England' in 1696, has calculated that, out of a population of about 5,500,000, about 2,700,000 ate meat daily, and that, of the remaining 2,800,000, 1,540,000 ate meat at least twice a week, while 240,000 were either sick persons or infants under thirteen months old. There remained 1,020,000 persons 'who receive alms, and consequently eat not flesh above once a week.' It would appear from this estimate that the whole population eat meat at least once a week and all healthy adults, who were not paupers, more than once;[2] while the

[1] These and many other statistics on the subject, are collected in Knight's *Pictorial Hist. of England*, iv. p. 700. Eden's *Hist. of the Working Classes*, iii. append. i. Thornton's *Over-Population*, p. 202.

[2] The immense proportion the paupers bore to the rest of the population will strike the reader, but Macaulay, in his famous third chapter, greatly exaggerated its significance as indicating the amount of real

gigantic consumption of beer, to which I have already referred, makes it almost certain that this was the common beverage of all classes. The same writer makes a curious attempt to estimate the average incomes of families in the different classes of society in 1688. That of the temporal lords he places at 2,800*l.*[1] That of baronets, at 880*l.*; that of esquires and of other gentlemen respectively at 450*l.* and 280*l.*; that of shopkeepers and tradesmen at 45*l.*; that of artisans and handicrafts at 40*l.*; that of labouring people and out-servants at 15*l.*; that of common soldiers at 14*l.*; that of cottagers and paupers at 6*l.* 10*s.* The average annual incomes of all classes he reckoned at 32*l.* a family, or 7*l.* 18*s.* a head. In France he calculated that the average annual income was 6*l.* a head, and in Holland 8*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.* From a careful comparison of the food of the different nations he calculated that the English annually spent on food, on an average, 3*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.* a head; the French, 2*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.*; the Dutch, 2*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.*[1]

Such estimates can, of course, only be accepted with much reservation; but they are the judgments of a very acute contemporary observer, and they are, no doubt, sufficiently accu-

misery in the community. The relief was out-door relief; there appears to have been no general feeling of shame about accepting it, and it was distributed with a most mischievous profusion. Richard Dunning, in a tract published in 1698, asserts that the parish pay was in fact three times as much as a common labourer, having to maintain a wife and three children, can afford to expend upon himself, and that 'persons once receiving parish pay presently become idle, alleging that the parish is bound to maintain them, and that in case they should work, it would only favour a parish from whom, they say, they shall have no thanks.' He assures us that 'such as are maintained by the parish pay, seldom drink any other than the strongest ale-house beer, which, at the rate they buy it, costs 50*s.* or 3*l.* a hogshead; that they seldom eat any bread save what is made of the finest wheat flour.' At this time there is reason to believe that wheat bread was almost unused among the labouring poor. The formation of workhouses in 1723 was of some advantage, but the diet of their inmates was most imprudently and indeed absurdly liberal. See Thornton's *Over-Population*, pp. 205–207. Knight's *Pictorial History*, iv. p. 844. Macaulay's picture of the condition of the poor should be compared with the admirable chapter on the same subject in Mr. Thornton's *Over-Population*. See, too, his *Labour*, pp. 11–12. The annual expenditure in poor rates is said to have trebled between the close of the reign of Anne and the year 1750 (Macpherson, *Hist. of Commerce*, iii. p. 560); yet nearly all the evidence we possess seems to show that the prosperity of the country had during that period been steadily increasing.

[1] This curious work is printed in full at the end of the later editions of Chalmers's *Estimate*. Macaulay, as will be seen, has much overcharged his picture of the wretchedness of the poor when he states, on the authority of King, that 'hundreds of thousands of families scarcely knew the taste of meat.'

rate to enable us to form a fair general conception of the relative proportions. In 1704 an abortive attempt which was made to extend the system of poor-law relief produced the 'Giving Alms no Charity,' one of the most admirable of the many excellent tracts of Defoe. No man then living was a shrewder or more practical observer, and he has collected many facts which throw a vivid light on the condition of the labouring poor. He states that although in Yorkshire, and generally in the bishopric of Durham, a labourer's weekly wages might be only 4*s*., yet in Kent and in several of the southern and western counties agricultural weekly wages were 7*s*., 9*s*., and even 10*s*. He mentions the case of a tilemaker, to whom he had for several years paid from 16*s*. to 20*s*. a week, and states that journeymen weavers could earn from 15*s*. to 20*s*. a week. The pauperism of the country he ascribes not to any want of employment, but almost wholly to habits of vagrancy, drunkenness, and extravagance. 'I affirm,' he says, 'of my own knowledge, that when I wanted a man for labouring work, and offered 9*s*. per week to strolling fellows at my door, they have frequently told me to my face that they could get more a-begging.' 'Good husbandry,' he adds, 'is no English virtue . . . it neither loves, nor is beloved by, an Englishman. The English get estates and the Dutch save them; and this observation I have made between foreigners and Englishmen—that where an Englishman earns his 20*s*. a week, and but just lives, as we call it, a Dutchman grows rich, and leaves his children in very good condition. Where an English labouring man, with his 9*s*. a week, lives wretchedly and poor, a Dutchman, with that wages, will live tolerably well. . . . We are the most lazy, idiligent nation in the world. There is nothing more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pockets full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drunk, till it is all gone, and perhaps himself in debt; and ask him, in his cups, what he intends, he'll tell you honestly he will drink as long as it lasts, and then go to work for more. I make no difficulty to promise, on a short summons, to produce above a thousand families in England, within my particular knowledge, who go in rags, and their children wanting bread, whose fathers can earn their 15*s*. to 25*s*. a week, but will not work. . . . The reason why so many pretend to want work is that, as they can

live so well on the pretence of wanting work, they would be mad to have it and work in earnest.' He maintains that wages in England were higher than in any other country in Europe, that hands and not employment were wanting, and that the condition of the labour market was clearly shown by the impossibility of obtaining a sufficient number of recruits for the army, without resorting to the press-gang. When, a few years later, the commercial treaty between France and England was discussed, one of the strongest arguments of its opponents was the danger of French competition, on account of the much greater cheapness of French labour. 'The French,' said one of the writers in the 'British Merchant,' 'did always outdo us in the price of labour; their common people live upon roots, cabbage, and other herbage; four of their large provinces subsist entirely upon chestnuts, and the best of them eat bread made of barley, millet, Turkey and black corn . . . they generally drink nothing but water, and at best a sort of liquor they call *beuverage* (which is water passed through the husks of grapes after the wine is drawn off); they save a great deal upon that account, for it is well known that our people spend half of their money in drink.'[1]

As far as we are able to judge from the few scattered facts that are preserved, the position of the poor seems on the whole to have steadily improved in the long pacific period during the reigns of George I. and George II. It was at this time that wheat bread began to supersede, among the labouring classes, bread made of rye, barley, or oats, and the rate of wages slightly advanced without any corresponding, or at least equivalent, rise in the price of the articles of first necessity. When Arthur Young investigated the agricultural condition of the southern counties in 1768, he found that the average weekly rate of agricultural wages for the whole year round, was 10*s.* 9*d.* within 20 miles of London; 7*s.* 8*d.* at a distance of from 20 to 60 miles from London; 6*s.* 4*d.* at from 60 to 110 miles

[1] *British Merchant*, i. 6, 7. 'I think nothing so terrible,' wrote Lady M. Montagu, when travelling through France in 1718, 'as objects of misery, except one had the God-like attribute of being capable to redress them; and all the country villages of France show nothing else. When the post-horses are changed, the whole town comes out to beg, with such miserable starved faces and thin tattered clothes, they need no other eloquence to persuade one of the wretchedness of their condition.' —Lady M. W. Montagu's *Works* (Lord Wharncliffe's edition), ii. p. 89.

from London; 6*s.* 3*d.* at from 110 to 170 miles. The highest wages were in the eastern counties, the lowest in the western counties, and especially in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. In some parts of these he found that the agricultural wages were not higher than 4*s.* 6*d.* in winter and 6*s.* in summer. In the north of England, which he described in 1770, he found that agricultural wages, for the whole year, ranged from 4*s.* 11*d.* to 9*s.* 9*d.*, the average being 7*s.* 1*d.* Within 300 miles to the north of London, the average rate in different districts varied only from 6*s.* 9*d.* to 7*s.* 2*d.*; but beyond that distance it fell to 5*s.* 8*d.* Twenty years later, the same admirable observer, after a detailed examination of the comparative condition of the labouring classes in England and France, pronounced agricultural wages in the latter country to be 76 per cent. lower than in England, and he has left a most emphatic testimony to the enormous superiority in well-being of the English labourer.[1]

One change, however, was taking place which was, on the whole, to his disadvantage. It was inevitable that with the progress of agriculture the vast tracts of common land scattered over England should be reclaimed and enclosed, and it was almost equally inevitable that the permanent advantage derived from them should be reaped by the surrounding landlords. Clauses were, it is true, inserted in most Enclosure Bills providing compensation for those who had common rights; and the mere increase of the net produce of the soil had some effect in raising the price of labour; but the main and enduring benefits of the enclosures necessarily remained with those in whose properties the common land was incorporated, and by whose capital it was fructified. After a few generations the right of free pasture, which the English peasant had formerly enjoyed, had passed away, while the compensation he had received was long since dissipated. The great movement for enclosing common land belongs chiefly to the reign of George III., but it had begun on a large scale under his predecessor. Only two Enclosure Acts had been passed under Anne, and only

[1] Arthur Young's *Southern Tour*, pp. 321-324. *Northern Tour*, iv. pp. 293-297. *Tour in France*. See, too, Eden's *Hist. of the Poor*, Thornton's *Over-Population and Labour*, Knight's *Pictorial Hist. of England*, vol. iv., Taine's *Ancien Régime*.

sixteen under George I. Under George II. there were no less than 226, and more than 318,000 acres were enclosed.[1]

Though the population of London was little more than a seventh of what it now is, the magnitude of the city relatively to the other towns of the kingdom was much greater than at present. Under the Tudors and the Stuarts many attempts had been made to check its growth by proclamations forbidding the erection of new houses, or the entertaining of additional inmates, and peremptorily enjoining the country gentry to return to their homes in order 'to perform the duties of their several charges . . . . to be a comfort unto their neighbours . . . . to renew and revive hospitality in their respective counties.' Many proclamations of this kind had been issued during the first half of the seventeenth century, but the last occasion in which the royal prerogative was exercised to prevent the extension of London beyond its ancient limits appears to have been in 1674.[2] From that time its progress was unimpeded, and Davenant in 1685 combated the prevalent notion that it was an evil.[3] The cities of London and Westminster, which had originally been far apart, were fully joined in the early years of the seventeenth century, partly, it is said, through the great number of Scotch who came to London on the accession of James I., and settled chiefly along the Strand.[4] The quarter now occupied by St. James's Square, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, and Arlington Street, was pasture land till about 1680. Evelyn, writing in 1684, stated that London had nearly doubled in his own recollection;[5] but in the beginning of the eighteenth century Hackney, Newington, Marylebone, Islington, Chelsea, and Kensington were still rural villages, far removed from the metropolis. Marylebone, which was probably the nearest, was separated from it by a full mile of fields. The growth of London in the first half of the eighteenth century appears to have been chiefly in the direction of Deptford, Hackney, and Bloomsbury. It spread also on the southern bank of the

[1] McCulloch's *Statistical Account of the British Empire*, i. 550.

[2] Eden's *Hist. of the Poor*, i. 136–137. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 114. See, too, on the alarm felt at the increase of London. *Parl. Hist.* iv. 660, 676, 679, 742, 743.

[3] *Essay upon Ways and Means.*

[4] Howell's *Londinopolis* (1657), p. 346.

[5] Evelyn's *Diary*, June 12, 1684.

Thames after the building of Westminster Bridge in 1736, and especially in the quarter of the rich, which was extending steadily towards the west. Horace Walpole mentions that when, in the reign of Charles II., Lord Burlington built his great house in Piccadilly, he was asked why he placed it so far out of town, and he answered, because he was determined to have no building beyond him. In little more than half a century Burlington House was so enclosed with new streets that it was in the heart of the west end of London.[1] In the reign of Queen Anne, the most fashionable quarters were Bloomsbury Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Soho Square, and Queen's Square, Westminster. In the reign of George II. they included Leicester Fields, Golden Square, and Charing Cross. Pall Mall, till the middle of the century, was a fashionable promenade. Among other amusements, smock-racing by women was kept up there till 1733.[2]

The great nobles whose houses once fringed the Strand generally moved westward. Cavendish, Hanover, and Grosvenor Squares, as well as New Bond Street, the upper part of Piccadilly, the greater part of Oxford Street, and many contiguous streets were built in the first half of the eighteenth century; but Portman Square was not erected till about 1764, nor Berkeley Square till 1798. On the present site of Curzon Street and of the adjoining streets, May fair, with one short interruption, was annually celebrated till 1756. It lasted for six weeks, and did much to demoralise the neighbourhood, which was also greatly injured by the crowds of ruffians who passed through that quarter to witness the frequent executions at Tyburn. In 1748 we find Chesterfield, whose house stood near the border of May fair, complaining bitterly that the neighbouring district was full of thieves and murderers.[3] It appears from a map of London, published in 1733,[4] that there then were no houses to the north of Oxford Street, except the new quarter of Cavendish Square which formed a small promontory bounded by Marylebone Street on the north and by Oxford Street on the south, and extending from Vere Street on the west to near the site which

[1] *Anecdotes of Painting.*

[2] Andrews's *Eighteenth Century*, p. 62.

[3] Doran's *Life and Letters of Mrs. Montagu*, pp. 274-275.

[4] Seymour's *Survey of London.*

is now occupied by Portland Road. Moving on eastward the northern frontier line of London touched Montague House, now the British Museum. It then gradually ascended, passed a few lanes to the north of Clerkenwell Green, and finally reached Hoxton, which was connected by some scattered houses with the metropolis. To the east, London stretched far into Whitechapel Street, Ratcliffe Highway, and Wapping, which, however, were divided from one another by large open spaces. To the west the new quarter of Grosvenor Square extended close to Hyde Park, and there were also a few houses clustered about Hyde Park Corner, but most of the space between Grosvenor Square and what is now called Piccadilly[1] was open ground. Along the Westminster bank of the river the town reached as far as the Horseferry opposite Lambeth. London Bridge was still the only bridge across the Thames, and the only considerable quarter on the southern side of the river was in its neighbourhood. Except a few scattered villages, open fields extended over all the ground which is now occupied by the crowded thoroughfares of Belgravia, Chelsea, and Kensington, and by the many square miles of houses which stretch along the north of London from St. John's Wood to Hackney.

No less than eight parishes were added between the Revolution and the death of George II.,[2] and many signs indicate the rapid extension of the town. The number of hackney coaches authorised in London, which was only 200 in 1652, was 800 in 1715,[3] and the number of sedan chairs was raised from 200 in 1694 to 400 in 1726.[4] A traveller noticed, about 1724, that while in Paris, Brussels, Rome, and Vienna, coaches could only be hired by the day, or at least by the hour, in London they stood at the corner of every street.[5] The old water-supply being found inadequate for the wants of the new western quarter, a company was founded in 1722, and a reservoir formed in Hyde Park.[6] Above all, in 1711 a most important step was taken in the interests of civilisation by the full organisation of a London

[1] The street was then only called Piccadilly to Devonshire House. The continuation was called Portugal Street, and near Hyde Park, the Exeter Road.

[2] Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 215.

[3] Macpherson, ii. 449; iii. 14.

[4] Ibid. ii. 655; iii. 134.

[5] Macky's *Journey through England*, i. 168. Muralt's *Letters on the English*, p. 84.

[6] Macpherson, iii. 121.

penny post.[1] Great progress was made, as we have already seen, in the first half of the eighteenth century in lighting the streets and protecting the passengers, but very little was done to embellish the city. The pavement was scandalously inferior to that of the great towns of the Continent, while the projecting gutters from the roofs of the houses made the streets almost impassable in the rain, and it was not until the first years of George III. that these evils were remedied by law.[2] Architectural taste during the ascendancy of Vanbrugh was extremely low, and it is worthy of note that the badness of the bricks employed in building, which has been represented as a peculiar characteristic of the workmanship of the present generation, was already a matter of frequent complaint.[3]

The London season extended from October to May, leaving four months during which the theatres were closed and all forms of dissipation suspended.[4] In the middle of the eighteenth century London was still unable to boast of any public gallery of ancient pictures or of any exhibition of the works of modern artists. The British Museum was not yet formed. Zoological Gardens were still unknown, and there was nothing of that variety of collections which is so conspicuous a feature of the present century. At the Tower, it is true, there had for centuries been a collection of wild animals, which many generations of country visitors regarded as so pre-eminent among the sights of London that it has even left its trace upon the language. The lions of the Tower are the origin of that

[1] Compare Macpherson, ii. 608; iii. 13. The penny post was first instituted in 1682 as a private enterprise by an upholsterer named Murray, who assigned it to one Dockwra, and Government ultimately adopted it. Its first mention in the Statute Book is in 1711.

[2] Pugh's *Life of Hanway*, pp. 127-139. See too the description of the state of the streets in Gay's *Trivia*. Macpherson's *Hist. of Commerce*, iii. 360, 477.

[3] Macaulay has noticed (c. iii.), on the authority of Duke Cosmo, the badness of the bricks of the city which was destroyed by the fire. Muralt, in the very beginning of the eighteenth century (p. 76), declares that London houses seldom last more than forty or fifty years, and sometimes drop before the end of that term. The author of the *Letters Concerning the Present State of England* (1772), says: 'The material of all common edifices, viz. bricks, are most insufferably bad, to a degree that destroys the beauty of half the buildings about town, making them seem of dirt and mud rather than brick. . . . A law might surely be enacted against using or making such detestable materials, by having all bricks undergo a survey or examination before sale, that are made in London' (p. 241).

[4] *Rambler*, No. 124.

application of the term 'lion' to any conspicuous spectacle or personage, which has long since become universal. A much larger proportion of amusements than at present were carried on in the open air. Besides the popular gatherings of May fair, Bartholomew fair, and Southwark fair, there were the public gardens of Vauxhall and of Ranelagh, which occupy so prominent a place in the pictures of fashionable life by Fielding, Walpole, Goldsmith, Lady W. Montagu, and Miss Burney, and also the less famous entertainments of Marylebone Gardens, and of Cuper's Gardens on the Lambeth side of the Thames. Vauxhall dated from the middle of the seventeenth century, but Ranelagh Gardens, which occupied part of the present site of the gardens of Chelsea Hospital, were only opened in 1742. Coffee-houses, though apparently less conspicuous centres of news, politics, and fashion than they had been under Anne, were still very numerous. At the present day every traveller is struck with the almost complete absence in London of this element of Continental life, but in the early years of the eighteenth century coffee-houses were probably more prominent in London than in any other city in Europe. A writer who described the metropolis in 1708, not much more than fifty years after the first coffee-house had been established in England, estimated the number of these institutions at nearly 3,000.[1]

The fashionable hours were becoming steadily later. Colley Cibber, in describing the popularity of Kynaston, a favourite actor of female parts under Charles II., mentions that ladies of quality were accustomed to take him with them in their coaches to Hyde Park in his theatrical habit after the play, which they could then do, as the play began at four o'clock.[2] 'The landmarks of our fathers,' wrote Steele in 1710, 'are removed, and planted further up in the day . . . in my own memory the dinner hour has crept by degrees from twelve o'clock to three. Where it will fix nobody knows.'[3] In the reign of George II. the most fashionable dinner hour appears to have been four. The habits of all classes were becoming less simple. Defoe

[1] Hatton's *New View of London*, i. p. 30. Many particulars relating to these coffee-houses will be found in Timbs's *Club Life in London*.

[2] Cibber's *Apology*, ch. 5.

[3] *Tatler*, No. 263. In the country the old hours seem to have gone on. Pope, in his *Epistle to Mrs. Blount, on*

noticed that within the memory of men still living the apprentices of shopkeepers and warehousemen habitually served the families of their masters at table, and discharged other menial functions which in the reign of George I. they would have indignantly spurned.[1] The merchants who had hitherto lived in the city near their counting-houses, began, early in the eighteenth century, to migrate to other quarters, though they at first seldom went further than Hatton Garden.[2] Domestic service was extremely disorganised. Almost all the complaints on this subject, which in our own day we hear upon every side and which are often cited as conclusive proofs of the degeneracy of the English people, were quite as loud and as emphatic a hundred and fifty years ago as at present. It was said that while no servants in Europe were so highly paid or so well fed as the English, none were so insolent, exacting, or nomadic, that the tie of affection between master and servant was completely broken, that on the smallest provocation or at the hope of the smallest increase of wages, or still more of vales, the servant threw up his place, and that no other single cause contributed so largely to the discomfort of families. Servants had their clubs, and their societies for maintaining each other when out of place, and they copied only too faithfully the follies and the vices of their masters. There were bitter complaints of how they wore their masters' clothes and assumed their masters' names, how there were in liveries 'beaux, fops, and coxcombs, in as high perfection as among people that kept equipages,' how near the entrance of the law-courts and the Parliament, a host of servants kept up 'such riotous clamour and licentious confusion' that 'one would think there were no such thing as rule or distinction among us.'[3] In the theatres especially they were a constant source of disturbance. It was

her leaving town for the country, says—

She went to plain work and to purling brooks,
Old-fashioned halls, dull aunts, and croaking rooks.
* * * * *
To pass her time twixt reading and bohea,
To muse, and spill her solitary tea,
Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,
Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon.

[1] *Behaviour of the Servants of England*, p. 12.

[2] See Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, p. 66.

[3] *Spectator*, No. 88. *World*, No. 157. Angeloni's *Letters on the English*, ii. 38–42. Defoe's *Behaviour of the Servants of England*. Fielding's *Old Men Taught Wisdom*. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1731, pp. 249–250. Gonzales, a Portuguese traveller who visited England in 1730, writes: 'As to the common and menial ser-

the custom of the upper classes to send their footmen before them to keep their places during the first acts of the play, and they afterwards usually retired to the upper gallery, to which they claimed the right of free admission. Their constant disorder led to their expulsion from Drury Lane theatre in 1737, which they resented by a furious riot. The presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales was unable to allay the storm, and order was not restored till twenty-five or twenty-six persons had been seriously injured.[1]

This state of things was the natural consequence of luxurious and ostentatious habits, acting upon a national character by no means peculiarly adapted to domestic service. There were, however, also several special causes at work, which made the condition of domestic service a great national evil. The most conspicuous were the custom of placing servants on board wages, which was very prevalent in the beginning of the century, and which encouraged them to frequent clubs and taverns; the constant attendance of servants upon their mistresses in the great scenes of fashionable dissipation; the law which communicated to the servants of peers and Members of Parliament the immunity from arrest for debt enjoyed by their masters; and, above all, the system of vales, which made servants in a great degree independent of their masters. This system had been carried in England to an extent unparalleled in Europe; and the great prominence given to it in the literature of the early half of the eighteenth century shows how widespread and demoralising it had become. When dining with his nearest relation a gentleman was expected to pay the servants who attended him, and no one of small fortune could accept many invitations from a great nobleman, on account of the large sums which had to be distributed among the numerous domestics.

vants [of London] they have great wages, are well kept and clothed, but are notwithstanding the plague of almost every house in town. They form themselves into societies, or, rather confederacies, contributing to the maintenance of each other when out of place, and if any of them cannot manage the family where they are entertained as they please, immediately they give notice they will be gone. There is no speaking to them; they are above correction. . . . It is become a common saying, "If my servant ben't a thief, if he be but honest, I can bear with other things," and, indeed, it is very rare to meet in London with an honest servant.'—Pinkerton's *Travels*, ii. 95.

[1] Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 63-64. Mrs. Delany's *Life and Correspondence*, i. 398-399.

No feature of English life seemed more revolting or astonishing to foreigners than an English entertainment where the guests, often under the eyes of the host, passed from the drawing-room through a double row of footmen, each one of them expecting and receiving his fee. It was said that a foreign minister, dining on a great occasion with a nobleman of the highest rank, usually expended in this way as much as ten guineas, that a sum of two or three guineas was a common expenditure in great houses, and that a poor clergyman, invited to dine with his bishop, not unfrequently spent in vales to the servants, at a single dinner, more than would have fed his family for a week. Dr. King tells a story of a poor nobleman who in Queen Anne's time was an intimate friend of the Duke of Ormond, and who regularly received a guinea with every invitation, for distribution among the servants of his host. The effect of this system in weakening the authority of masters, and in demoralising servants, was universally recognised, and soon after the middle of the century a great movement arose to abolish it, the servants being compensated by a higher rate of wages. The movement began among the gentry of Scotland. The grand jury of Northumberland and the grand jury of Wiltshire followed the example, pledging themselves to discourage the system of vales, but many years still elapsed before it was finally eradicated.[1]

Of the sanitary condition of the city it is extremely difficult to speak with confidence. There is reason to believe that cleanliness and good ventilation had greatly increased,[2] and in at least one respect a marked improvement of the national health had recently taken place. The plague of London was not a single

[1] *Eight Letters to his Grace the Duke of —— on the Custom of Vails-giving in England* [by Hanway, the Persian traveller] (London, 1760). King's *Anecdotes of his Own Time*, pp. 51–52. Reresby's *Memoirs*, p. 377. Angeloni's *Letters on the English*, ii. pp. 38–42. *World*, No. 60. *Connoisseur*, No. 70. Dodsley's *High Life below Stairs*. Roberts's *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, pp. 32–34.

[2] 'Many of its streets have been widened, made straight, raised, paved with easy descents to carry off the water; besides wells in most public yards, and pipes for conveying plenty of fresh water to keep them clean and sweet; many late stately edifices, large clean courts, lofty rooms, large sash-lights, &c., and many excellent conveniences both by land and water, for supplying the city with fresh provisions at moderate prices . . . must contribute not a little to make the city more healthy.'—Short's *Comparative Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind in England and Abroad* (1767), p. 20. See, too, Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 321.

or isolated outburst. It had been chronic in London during the whole of the seventeenth century, and though greatly diminished had not been extirpated by the fire. By the beginning of the eighteenth century it completely disappeared, and it was noticed that from this time the deaths from colic and dysentery decreased with an extraordinary rapidity. In each successive decennial period in the first half of the eighteenth century the annual average of deaths from this source was much less than in the preceding one, and the average in the last decennial period is said to have been little more than a tenth of what it had been in the first one.[1] The statistics, however, both of disease and of population, were so fluctuating and so uncertain that it is rash to base much upon them. It appears, however, evident that the mortality of the towns as compared with the country, and the mortality of infants as compared with adults, were considerably greater than at present,[2] and also that the population of London in the second quarter of the century, if it did not, as was often said, absolutely decrease, at least advanced much less rapidly than in the first quarter. The great spread of gin-drinking was followed both by a serious diminution in the number of births, and by a great increase in the number of deaths, and was, no doubt, regarded, with justice, as the chief enemy of the public health.[3] Medical science had been some-

[1] Heberden's *Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Different Diseases* (1801). This eminent authority, having given many statistics on the subject, concludes: 'The cause of so great an alteration in the health of the people of England (for it is not confined to the metropolis) I have no hesitation in attributing to the improvements which have gradually taken place, not only in London but in all the great towns, and in the manner of living throughout the kingdom; particularly in respect to cleanliness and ventilation' (p. 35).

[2] See the article on Vital Statistics, in McCulloch's *Statistical Account of the British Empire*, and Short's *Comparative History*. According to Short 'the cities and great towns in the kingdom may be deemed as so many slaughterhouses of the people of the nation' (p. 22).

[3] Dr. Short says the passion for spirituous liquors 'began to diffuse its pernicious effects in 1724, at the very time when the city began to be more fruitful and healthy than it had been since the Restoration. How powerfully this poison wrought let us now see. From 1704 to 1724 were born 336,514, buried 474,125. Let us allow fourteen years for this dire bane to spread, operate, and become epidemic; then from 1738 to 1758 were born 296,831, buried 486,171. Here we have two shocking effects of this bewitching liquor. First, here is a greater barrenness, a decrease or want of 40,000 of ordinary births which the last vicennary produced, instead of an increase, as we had in other vicennaries. Secondly, an increase of 12,000 burynys, though there was so great a defec.. of births.'—Short's *Comparative History*, p. 21.

what improved, but the practice of lowering the constitution by excessive bleedings was so general that it may be questioned whether on the whole it did not kill more than it cured. The great progress of botany had, as was natural, some effect upon it. A garden of medical plants was created at Chelsea by the Company of Apothecaries as early as 1673, and it was greatly improved in the early years of the eighteenth century, chiefly by the instrumentality of Sir Hans Sloane. This very remarkable man was almost equally distinguished as a physician and as a botanist, and among other services to medicine he greatly extended the use of Peruvian bark.[1] A still more important fact in the history of English medicine was the increased study of anatomy. The popular prejudice against dissection which had for centuries paralysed and almost prevented this study still ran so high in England that in spite of the number of capital punishments, it was only with great difficulty the civil power could accommodate surgeons with proper subjects, and all publicity was studiously avoided. No English artist, unless he desired to hold up to abhorrence the persons whose portraits he drew, would have painted such a subject as the famous study of anatomy by Rembrandt. With such a state of feeling it is not surprising that the English medical school, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, should have been far inferior to that which gathered round the chair of Boerhaave at Leyden. In the reign of Queen Anne, however, a French refugee surgeon, named Bussière, began for the first time to give public lectures on anatomy in England, and the example was speedily followed by two anatomists of great ability.[2] Cheselden commenced, in 1711, a series of lectures on anatomy, which continued for twenty years. The first Monro opened a similar course at Edinburgh in 1719, and a school of medicine arose in that city which in the latter part of the century had no superior in Europe. The passion for anatomy was shown in the illegal efforts made to obtain bodies for dissection; and Shenstone in one of his

[1] Pulteney, *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 85, 99-103.

[2] Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, iv. 618. Miller's *Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 10. Charles II. had given the Royal Society the privilege of taking bodies of malefactors for anatomical purposes. Hatton's *New View of London*, ii. 665.

elegies, complains bitterly of the frequent violation of the tomb.[1]

In the first half of the eighteenth century also the first serious attempt was made to restrain the small-pox, which had long been one of the greatest scourges of Europe. Inoculation, as is well known, was introduced into England from Turkey by Lady Mary Montagu, and by Dr. Maitland, the physician of the Embassy, and the son of the former, afterwards the famous traveller, was the first English subject who was inoculated. On her return to England in 1722, Lady Mary Montagu laboured earnestly to propagate the system, and the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline, whose mind was always open to new ideas and who exhibited no small courage in carrying them out, at once perceived the importance of the discovery. She obtained permission to have the experiment tried on five criminals who had been condemned to death, and who were pardoned on condition of undergoing it. In four cases it was perfectly successful, and the remaining criminal confessed that she had had the disease when a child.

The physicians, however, at first generally discouraged the practice. Popular feeling was vehemently roused against it, and some theologians denounced it as tempting Providence by artificially superinducing disease, endeavouring to counteract a Divine visitation, and imitating the action of the devil, who caused boils to break out upon the body of Job. Sir Hans Sloane, however, fully recognised the value of inoculation, and the Princess of Wales had two of her children inoculated in the very beginning of the movement. This act exposed her to no little obloquy, but it had some effect in encouraging the practice, and the adhesion of Madox, the Bishop of Worcester, was useful in counteracting the theological prejudice it had aroused. Still for some years it advanced very slowly. Only 845 persons were inoculated in England in the eight years that followed its introduction, and it seemed likely altogether to die out when news arrived that some of the planters in the West Indies had made use of it for their slaves with complete success. From this time the tide turned. In 1746 a small-pox hospital was founded in London for the purpose of inoculation, and in 1754 the

[1] Elegy xxii.

College of Physicians pronounced in its favour. It had, however, long to struggle against a violent prejudice in the country, and as late as 1765 only 6,000 persons had been inoculated in Scotland.

This prejudice was less unreasonable than has been supposed. Though some patients died from inoculation, its efficacy in securing those who underwent the operation from one of the most deadly of diseases was unquestionable. It was, however, only very partially practised, and as its object was to produce in the patient the disease in a mitigated form, it had the effect of greatly multiplying centres of infection, and thus propagating the very evil it was intended to arrest. To those who were wise enough to avail themselves of it, it was a great blessing; but to the poor and the ignorant, who repudiated it, it was a scourge, and for some years after it was widely introduced, the deaths from small-pox were found rapidly to increase. If inoculation can be regarded as a national benefit it was chiefly because it led the way to the great discovery of Jenner.[1]

It was in this respect somewhat characteristic of the period in which it arose. One of the most remarkable features of the first sixty years of the eighteenth century is the great number of new powers or influences that were then called into action of which the full significance was only perceived long afterwards. It was in this period that Russia began to intervene actively in Western politics, and Prussia to emerge from the crowd of obscure German States into a position of commanding eminence. It was in this period that the first steps were taken in many works which were destined in succeeding generations to exercise the widest and most abiding influence on human affairs. It was then that the English Deists promulgated doctrines which led the way to the great movement of European scepticism, that Diderot founded the French Encyclopedia, that Voltaire began his crusade against the dominant religion of

[1] Lady M. W. Montagu's *Works*, *Eighteenth Century*, iv. 625. Nichols' (Lord Wharncliffe's ed.), i. [illegible] *Literary Illustrations*, i. 277–280. 55–60, 391–393. Baron's *Life* [illegible] *Lettres sur les Anglois*, let. *Jenner*, vol. i. 230–233. *Gentleman's* [illegible] [illegible]en's *Observations on the Magazine*, xxvii. 409. Haygarth on [illegible] *Increase and Decrease of Disease, Casual Small-pox* (1793), vol. i. p. 31, [illegible] 36. Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the*

Christendom; that a few obscure Quakers began the long struggle for the abolition of slavery; that Wesley sowed the first seeds of religious revival in England. Without any great or salient revolutions the aspect of Europe was slowly changing, and before the middle of the century had arrived both the balance of power and the lines of division and antagonism were profoundly modified. Industrial interests and the commercial spirit had acquired a new preponderance in politics, and theological influence had at least proportionately declined. The fear of Mohammedan aggression, which was one great source of theological passions in Christendom, had now passed away. The power of the Turks was broken by the war which ended in the Peace of Carlowitz, and eighteen years later by the victories of Eugene, and although they waged a successful war with Austria in 1739, their triumph was much more due to the disorganisation of their opponents than to their own strength. Among Christian sects the frontier lines were now clearly traced. In Germany, as we have seen, the political position of Protestantism at the time of the Revolution appeared very precarious, and a new danger arose when the Sovereign of Saxony bartered his faith for the crown of Poland. But this danger had wholly passed. The elevation of Hanover into an Electorate and of Prussia into a kingdom, the additional strength acquired by Hanover through its connection with England, and the rapid development of the greatness of Prussia, would have secured German Protestantism from danger even if the zeal of the Catholic States had not greatly abated. The only religious war of the period broke out in Switzerland in 1712, and it ended in the complete triumph of the Protestant cantons, and the spirit of fanaticism and of persecution had everywhere declined. Two Protestant States, however, which had played a great and noble part in the history of the seventeenth century had sunk gradually into comparative insignificance. Sweden never recovered the effects of its disastrous war with Russia. Holland, through causes that were partly political and partly economical, had ceased to exercise any great influence beyond its borders. France exhibited some decline of energy and ambition, and a marked decline of administrative and military ability; and some

of the elements of opposition might be already detected which led to the closing years of the Revolution. In England the Protestant succession and Parliamentary privileges were firmly established, and the position of the country in Europe was on the whole assured.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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